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ENGLISH CLASSICS COMPLETELY ANALYZED

*The Most Difficult English Classics Required by
the Regents—and College Entrance Board
Examinations Completely Analyzed*

BY

THOMAS F. CLARK

Principal of The Clark School for Concentration



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NOTE

For a discussion of modern poetry, modern essays, modern plays, together with complete outlines of *Treasure Island*, *Ivanhoe*, *Silas Marner*, *The Tale of Two Cities*, *Lincoln's First Inaugural* and *Essays on Shelley and Wordsworth*—see *Clark's Four Years English*.

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To Students:

The English requirements in this book have been analyzed to help you enjoy Shakespeare, Milton, Macaulay and Burke. They aim to overcome the difficulties you have met in other texts and to picture for you the minds of these men in such a way that they will be your intimate companions all through your lives.

THOMAS F. CLARK.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
ANALYZED

PERSONS REPRESENTED

Duke of Venice.

Prince of Morocco, } suitors to Portia.

Prince of Arragon, }

ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice.

BASSANIO, his friend, suitor to Portia.

SALANIO, }

SALARINO, } friends to Antonio and Bassanio .

GRATIANO, }

SALERIO, }

LORENZO, in love with Jessica.

SHYLOCK, a rich Jew.

TUBAL, a Jew, his friend.

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, a clown, servant to Shylock.

OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot.

LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio.

BALTHASAR, }

STEPHANO, } servants to Portia.

PORTIA, a rich heiress.

NERISSA, her waiting-maid.

JESSICA, daughter to Shylock.

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler,
Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

SCENE—*Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat
of Portia, on the Continent.*

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE ANALYZED

Act I

Scene 1

Story

Antonio, a wealthy and respected merchant of Venice, feels an unaccountable sadness which his gay friends cannot analyze since he is neither in need of money nor yet in love. Bassanio, his dearest friend, tells of his own love for beautiful Portia of Belmont; and since Bassanio has not the money that he needs for a journey to Belmont to court her, Antonio plans to borrow it for him upon the security of his many ships at sea.

Analysis

There are, in this play, two plots; the first, which is the main, is concerned with Antonio, Bassanio, and Portia because of Bassanio's wooing; the second, or sub-plot, deals with the Jew Shylock and his loan to Antonio. This scene connects these two plots. Antonio borrowed from Shylock to make possible the courtship of Bassanio and Portia. A slight clue to the successful outcome of the main plot is to be found in Bassanio's line: "Sometimes from her eyes I did receive fair speechless messages." Antonio's strange sadness predicts his bad fortune in the imminent destruction of his argosies; the

ready sympathy of his friends Salarino, Salanio, Lorenzo, Gratiano, and more particularly Bassanio, gives evidence of the honored position he held in Venice. Gratiano is the loquacious comrade; the others are affectionate, care-free young men.

Passages in Act I to be Studied for Characterization

NATURE FRAMES SOME MEN CHEERFUL, OTHERS SAD

Salarino—Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad,

Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,
And other of such vinegar aspect
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

ANTONIO DEFINES THE VALUE OF THE WORLD

Antonio—I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

A CHEERFUL MAN RIDICULES AFFECTED GRAVITY

Gratiano— Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,

And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
As who should say 'I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!'
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.

GRATIANO, A LOQUACIOUS FELLOW

Bassanio—Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing,
more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are
as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff:
you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when
you have them, they are not worth the search.

BASSANIO, THE SPENDTHRIFT

Bassanio—'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time something too prodigal
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love,
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

BASSANIO, THE BORROWER

Bassanio—In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the selfsame flight
The selfsame way with more advised watch,
To find the other forth; and, by adventuring both,
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,

Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost: but, if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

BASSANIO, THE FORTUNE-HUNTER

Bassanio—In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate!

THE GENEROUS ANTONIO

Antonio—Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea
Neither have I money nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do:
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is, and I no question make
To have it of my trust or for my sake.

Unusual Words and Phrases

- want-wit*—one lacking in sound judgment
argosies—large merchant vessels
Burghers—citizens
still—always
roads—anchoring places off-shore, for example:
 Hampton Roads
vailing—lowering
Janus—Roman god of all beginnings, porter of
 heaven figured as having two heads, one laugh-
 ing and one serious
Nestor—oldest and most serious of Greek warriors
 at the siege of Troy
prevent—anticipate
strange—aloof
respect—reflection
mortifying—deathly
cream—cover
entertain—maintain
opinion—reputation
conceit—judgment
oracle—person with infallible judgment
gudgeon—an easily-caught fish
gear—nonsense
neat—ox
not vendible—not worth anything
something—somewhat
gaged—pledged
warranty—proof
eye—range
flight—weight and length
innocence—simple honesty
circumstances—ceremony

prest—ready

sometimes—one time

Colchos—the place where the golden fleece was suspended from a tree

golden fleece—Greek legend of the quest of the golden fleece by Jason

trust—credit

sake—personal bond

Act I

Scene 2

Story

This scene is laid in Belmont, and presents Portia with her lady-in-waiting, Nerissa. Portia complains that her "little body is aweary of this great world" because the privilege of choosing her own husband is denied her. A dead father's will requires that each who seeks her hand must first choose one of three caskets, and if that choice prove wrong the suitor is to be rejected. Nerissa chides her mistress's impatience. Then as she names her lady's suitors, Portia characterizes her princely wooers who have already arrived; the first is "a colt indeed" because he does nothing but talk of his horse; another is too full of frowns and sadness; the French lord is merely a puppet who changes with every new influence; a young baron of England cannot converse with Portia because "he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian," moreover his clothes seem to have been copied from the styles of many different countries; a Scotch lord and a German duke are also derided. Portia's fear that she may be forced to choose one of those whom she has

ridiculed, is removed when Nerissa tells her that her six suitors have decided to forego the lottery and to leave Belmont. But Nerissa slyly suggests Bassanio, who has once visited Belmont when Portia's father was alive. Portia not only remembers him, but remembers him with favor. At the same time, the Prince of Morocco, another suitor, is announced.

Analysis

This scene demonstrates Portia's ready, nimble wit as the strange terms which govern her marriage are discussed, and her unwelcome suitors are mischievously criticized by this beautiful, much-sought, little lady. Shakespeare gives no definite description of the sunniest of his heroines. Bassanio has told Antonio that she is fair, possessed of wondrous virtues and sought by many. She describes herself as an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpracticed, but as the reader is told no more than this, he must paint Portia himself. That she is an excellent judge of character can be learned from her criticisms of the first group of her six fortune-hunting admirers.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

THE MIDDLE COURSE IN LIFE IS BEST

Nerissa—You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

TO GIVE ADVICE IS EASIER THAN TO PRACTICE IT

Portia—If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cot-

tages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

HOLY MEN AT DEATH ARE INSPIRED

Nerissa—Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly but one who shall rightly love.

THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE BRINGS OUT PORTIA'S GIRLISHNESS

Nerissa—But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Portia—I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Nerissa—First, there is the Neapolitan Prince.

Portia—Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

Nerissa—Then there is the County Palatine.

Portia—He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If you will not have me, choose': he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of un-

mannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

Nerissa—How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Portia—God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a-capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Nerissa—What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

Portia—You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behavior every where.

Nerissa—What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor?

Portia—That he hath a neighborly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under for another.

Nerissa—How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Portia—Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an the

worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Nerissa—If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Portia—Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, *Nerissa*, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

Nerissa—You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

Portia—If I live to be as old as *Sibylla*, I will die as chaste as *Diana*, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Nerissa—Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Portia—Yes, yes, it was *Bassanio*; as I think, he was so called.

Nerissa—True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Portia—I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Unusual Words and Phrases

competency—wealth sufficient only to meet needs

level at—guess at

weeping philosopher—*Heraclitus* of *Ephesus*, the opposite of *Democritus*, the laughing one

proper—handsome

dumb-show—pantomime

imposition—condition imposed

Sibylla—name of the Cumaean prophetess

Act I

Scene 3

Story

Shylock, the Jew, arranges to lend Antonio the three thousand ducats which Bassanio needs. If the debt is not paid within three months, the forfeit is to be a pound of Antonio's flesh. Bassanio remonstrates but Antonio, depending upon the safe return of his foreign fleets, feels sure of his ability to meet the debt within the time allotted.

Analysis

This scene marks the end of the introduction and the beginning of the development of the drama. Shylock's appearance introduces to us one of Shakespeare's greatest characterizations, the loan merchant of Venice, one who has suffered insults and ostracism from these who now seek his aid. Their conversation shows that Antonio and Shylock are enemies of long acquaintance upon the Rialto, that Shylock is proud of his nation, and his "well-won thrift," that he considers Antonio good security for the loan, that the terms of the bargain are tricky, that he reminds the Christians that Antonio's "means are in suppositions, that ships are but boards, that he could not gain anything by the exaction of the forfeiture, and that a pound of man's flesh is not so estimable, or as profitable as flesh of muttons." This fact is important. When the bond is sealed, Shylock is not the revengeful, vicious creature that he became after he had been tortured by the loss of his daughter, and his money. Bassanio's reluct-

ance to have his friend accept the dangerous terms of the bargain foreshadows disaster for Antonio.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

SHYLOCK LIKED TO TRADE WITH CHRISTIANS

Shylock—I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you.

SHYLOCK'S REASONS FOR HATING ANTONIO

Shylock—[*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

THE ALTRUISTIC ANTONIO

Antonio—Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom.

SHYLOCK A HYPOCRITE

Antonio— Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

SHYLOCK NAMES THE INSULTS ANTONIO HAS HEAPED
UPON HIM

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Shylock—Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat, dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say,
'Shylock, we would have moneys'; you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this,—
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurned me such a day; another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys?"

ANTONIO ADMITS ALL OF SHYLOCK'S CHARGES

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Antonio—I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.

AN OBSEQUIOUS SHYLOCK

Shylock— Why, look you, how you storm!
 I would be friends with you and have your love,
 Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
 Supply your present wants and take no doit
 Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me:
 This is kind I offer.

THE CRAFTY SHYLOCK

Shylock— This kindness will I show.
 Go with me to a notary, seal me there
 Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
 If you repay me not on such a day,
 In such a place, such sum or sums as are
 Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
 Be nominated for an equal pound
 Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
 In what part of your body pleaseth me.

UNFEELING CHRISTIANS

Shylock—O father Abram, what these Christians are.
 Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
 The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
 If he should break his day, what should I gain
 By the exaction of the forfeiture?
 A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
 Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
 As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
 To buy his favor, I extend this friendship:
 If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
 And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Unusual Words and Phrases

ducat—about a dollar

may you—are you able and willing?

stead—help, support

Rialto—bridge at the Rialto building in Venice,
 meeting place for merchants

publican—Roman tax-collector among the early
Judeans

usance—interest, not extortion

upon the hip—advantageous catch in wrestling

excess—interest, any amount over the principal

ripe wants—those that demand immediate attention

possessed—informed

eanlings—new born lambs

pied—striped

beholding—obligated

who if he break—if he fail to keep his bond

doit—small Dutch coin

Act II

Scene 1

Story

The Prince of Morocco who has come to seek Portia through the lottery of the caskets begs that she will not dislike him because of his dark skin, "the shadowed livery of the burnished sun." Portia assures him that he is as pleasing to her as any who have yet come to seek her. The Prince boasts of his ability and bravery which, unfortunately for him, cannot overpower chance. Portia conducts him to the temple where he swears that if he fail in this quest he will leave Belmont at once, that he will never again seek to marry; and that he will not reveal the name of the casket he chose.

Analysis

Morocco is an interesting suitor. His boasting and self-assurance at once make his readers hostile. As a creator of suspense, he is unequalled. He has the ability

to arouse in one fear of his success. Readers who have been charmed by the wit, words and worth of the lovely Portia do not want to see her married to a negro, and consequently Shakespeare keeps their interest at the boiling point throughout this interview.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

TO CREATE SUSPENSE SHAKESPEARE GIVES A NEGRO
A CHANCE TO WIN PORTIA

Morocco—Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
To whom I am a neighbor and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath fear'd the valiant: by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

A SARCASTIC PORTIA

Portia—In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:
But if my father had not scanted me
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection.

MOROCCO, A BOASTFUL PRINCE

Morocco— By this scimitar,
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince,
That won three fields of Sultan Solymán,

I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
 Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
 Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
 Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
 To win thee, lady.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Phoebus—God of the Sun

incision—to cut one's self to show the sincerity of
 one's love

aspect—appearance

nice—particular

scimitar—sword

Sophy—Shah of Persia

Lichas—the servant of Hercules

Alcides—Hercules, the descendant of Alcaeus

advised—cautious, deliberate

Act II

Scene 2

Story

Launcelot Gobbo, servant to Shylock, persuades his blind father to give to Bassanio the present which the old man had intended for the Jew, so that Launcelot may escape from Shylock and enter Bassanio's service. Bassanio warns Gobbo that he is leaving a rich master for a poor one. Bassanio's attention is centered upon plans for his journey to Portia of Belmont, and, as he is giving directions to his attendant Leonardo, Gratiano, his loquacious friend, enters to beg that he also be permitted to go to Belmont.

This scene, by introducing humor, serves as a lull in the movement of the main plots, relieves the tensify of the drama and prevents the action from progressing too rapidly.

Analysis

Launcelot's monologue and his meeting with his father offer an example of that "low comedy" of which Shakespeare is master. Launcelot is a country yokel, whose chief humor lies in his awkwardly-turned phrases and his incongruous self-satisfaction. It may be some small tribute to Bassanio that Launcelot is so anxious to serve him. Certainly from a dramatic view the change in Launcelot's situation knits more firmly the stories of Antonio and Bassanio, and Antonio and Shylock. Bassanio, however, is too busy to give a long audience to the clown, because he is concerned with Gratiano's garrulous nature since, for some unknown reason, Gratiano is very anxious to make the journey to Belmont.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

HUMOROUS LAUNCELOT

Launcelot—Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says, 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as afore-said, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run, Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I,

'you counsel well'; 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well': to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.

THE VOLUBLE GRATIANO

Bassanio—Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;
 Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice;
 Parts that become thee happily enough
 And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
 But where thou art not known, why, there they show
 Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
 To allay with some cold drops of modesty
 Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behavior
 I be misconstrued in the place I go to
 And lose my hopes.

GRATIANO PROMISES TO BE MODEST

Gratiano— Signior Bassanio, hear me:
 If I do not put on a sober habit,
 Talk with respect and swear but now and then,
 Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
 Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
 Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen,'
 Use all the observance of civility,
 Like one well studied in a sad ostent
 To please his grandam, never trust me more.

Unusual Words and Phrases

grow to—rustic colloquialism applied to milk which
 has stuck to the pan, and acquired a foreign
 taste

marry—indeed, verily
well to live—well off, well to do
what a will—what he will
sisters three—the Fates
set up my rest—stake all, make up one's mind
preferred—recommended, promoted
guarded—decorated, ornamented
table—palm of the hand
ostent—appearance

“Gobboisms”

incarnal—incarnate
commandment—command
sand-blind—half blind
sonties—saints
ergo—therefore
gramercy—many thanks
infection—affection, or intention
frutify (*fructify*)—hold forth
impertinent—pertinent

Act II

Scene 3

Story

Jessica, the beautiful daughter of Shylock, bids Launcelot farewell, with regret that he is leaving the Jew's service, because his merry spirit relieved the gloomy atmosphere of the house. Jessica gives the clown a letter for Lorenzo who is to be Bassanio's guest at dinner. Launcelot tearfully takes his departure, predicting that some Christian will wish to marry Jessica. This Christian, the reader soon learns, is Lorenzo.

Analysis

Through Jessica the home life of Shylock is reflected. That it was gloomy and full of strife cannot be doubted and that the clownish Launcelot relieved its somewhat tiresome sameness is admitted by his lively daughter who is modern enough to be ashamed of her old-fashioned life and to repudiate his stern manners by choosing a way of living which she thought would give her more freedom and happiness.

Passages to be Memorized

JESSICA'S HOME

Jessica—I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
 Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
 Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
 But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee:
 And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
 Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
 Give him this letter; do it secretly;
 And so farewell: I would not have my father
 See me in talk with thee.

JESSICA REPUDIATES HER FATHER'S MANNERS

Jessica—Farewell, good Launcelot.

[*Exit Launcelot.*]

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
 To be ashamed to be my father's child!
 But though I am a daughter to his blood,
 I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
 If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
 Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*]

Act II

Scene 4

Story

Launcelot Gobbo delivers Jessica's missive to Lorenzo while Lorenzo, Salarino, Gratiano and Salanio are making plans for their evening masque. Lorenzo reads the letter, then informs his friends that he has a torch-bearer for their revel. They part, agreeing to meet within the hour at Gratiano's house. The letter which Lorenzo reads to Gratiano directs Lorenzo how he shall take Jessica from her father's house, and tells him what jewels and gold she has planned to carry off with her. In the meanwhile Launcelot has gone to invite Shylock to dine at Bassanio's house.

Analysis

Scene 4 adds little to the play except the light it throws on Jessica's character. In her letter to Lorenzo, she shows that she is more eager to elope than Lorenzo, that it is she who plans the escape, and that she is her father's child enough to provide herself and lover with gold and jewels sufficient for their eventful journey. Lorenzo's praise tells the reader that in spite of her surroundings she is gentle—a quality most agreeable to his poetic soul.

JESSICA DIRECTS HER OWN ELOPEMENT

Lorenzo—I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house,
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.

Act II

Scene 5

Story

Shylock goes to dine with Bassanio, leaving the keys of his house to Jessica. After his departure Jessica hints that she is going to desert him.

Analysis

Shylock's hatred of the Christians matches their scorn for him, and he suggests in this scene that the fortunes of Bassanio and Antonio are not so favorable as these gentlemen suppose. Jessica's plan to desert her father is here suggested. Shylock's gentler side is apparent in his not unkind, humorous criticism of Launcelot; and contrary to Jessica's implication, her father trusts her and treats her affectionately: "Jessica, my girl, look to my house * * * there are my keys."

Now the sub-action, concerning Shylock, Jessica and Lorenzo, is under way, supplementing the theme of the chief plot concerning Antonio, Bassanio and Portia.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

SHYLOCK DESCRIBES LAUNCELOT

Shylock—Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:—
What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandise,
As thou hast done with me:—What, Jessica!—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out;—
Why, Jessica, I say!

AN HATEFUL GUEST

Shylock—I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:
There are my keys.—But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian.—Jessica, my girl,

Look to my house.—I am right loth to go.
 There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
 For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

SHYLOCK OBJECTS TO MUSIC

Shylock—Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum

And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,
 Clamber you not up to the casements then,
 Nor thrust your head into the public street
 To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces;
 But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:
 Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
 My sober house.—By Jacob's staff, I swear,
 I have no mind of feasting forth to-night;
 But I will go.—Go you before me, sirrah;
 Say I will come.

SHYLOCK BEGRUDGES FOOD TO LAUNCELOT

Shylock—The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder;
 Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
 More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me
 Therefore I part with him, and part with him
 To one that I would have him help to waste
 His borrow'd purse.—Well, Jessica, go in:
 Perhaps I will return immediately.
 Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:
 Fast bind, fast find;
 A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.

Unusual Words and Phrases

reproach—"Gobboism" for approach

Black Monday—Easter Monday, so-named after the
 disastrous Easter Monday of 1360 on which
 Edward III laid siege to Paris

masque—procession of masked merry-makers

varnished faces—painted, disguised. Imputation of
 hypocrisy

patch—motley garbed clown

Act II

Scene 6

Story

Gratiano and Salarino meet Lorenzo at Shylock's house to assist the elopement under pretext of a masque. Jessica takes with her a casket of her father's jewels, and his money. She and Lorenzo escape with Salarino, leaving Gratiano to meet Antonio, who comes in search of his friends and announces Bassanio's early departure for Belmont.

Analysis

Jessica's shyness and girlish modesty in her boy's disguise cannot compensate for her robbery and for her violation of her father's trust when he gave the keys of his house into her keeping. She may have felt that she had some claim upon the jewels since, as Shylock mentions later (Act III, Scene 1) some had belonged to her mother, yet this circumstance makes the treasures doubly precious to Shylock. Jessica seems to enjoy rather than regret her act. She is deeply in love with Lorenzo, although the attitude of her lover and his friends is heavily colored with derision of Shylock and exultation over his loss.

The mechanical importance of this sub-action is that it bridges over the interval between Antonio's negotiation with the Jew and the time when his bond falls due. It keeps up the reader's interest in the part of the plot that has to do with the Jews, and further joins the stories of Jews and Christians.

Passages to be Studied

ANTICIPATION HAS MORE FERVOR THAN REALIZATION

Salarino—O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

Gratiano—That ever holds: who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

JESSICA'S MODESTY

Jessica—I am glad 't is night, you do not look on me,
For I am much asham'd of my exchange:
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For, if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

LORENZO, A REAL LOVER

Lorenzo—Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
And true she is, as she hath proved herself,
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

Unusual Words and Phrases

pent-house—shed

Venus' pigeons—the doves that drew Venus' chariot

younger—younger, or youngster

scarfed—decorated with banners

abode—abiding, delaying

albeit—or else

exchange—change of costume

stayed for—awaited

beshrew me—curse me; here used merely as expletive

Act II

Scene 7

Story

The scene returns to Portia's palace, to the room where the Prince of Morocco is to make his choice of the caskets in the hope of selecting the one which contains Portia's picture, and which will make Portia his bride. The casket of lead is passed over, because its inscription reads, "Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath," and the Prince holds that a noble mind would not risk so much on a lowly venture. The box of silver causes the Prince to pause, for it reads, "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves," and in lineage, fortune, breeding, and devotion he thinks that he deserves fair Portia; but the saying on the gold casket determines his choice of it, for it claims, "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire," and the Prince is wholly convinced that such a choice must win Portia. He is bitterly disappointed to find within a Death's head, and the admonition, "All that glitters is not gold"; so, not at all to Portia's regret, he departs.

Analysis

The scene of the Prince of Morocco's choice contains the first step in the sub-plot of the Portia story, and here the climax of the love story begins. Bassanio's courting of Portia is the main plot of the whole play, and the choice of the caskets is the sub-plot within. The reader knows that Bassanio is coming to seek Portia, but suspense is maintained by the intervention of the quests of others. Both the main and the sub-plots revolve about Portia. If Bassanio had not desired her, Antonio would not have borrowed from Shylock so that Bassanio could go to Belmont. As for the Prince of Morocco himself, he erred in judging by appearance only. He was conceited and ambitious and since he considered Portia merely as a suitable ornament to his own greatness, he presumed that the key to winning her must be found in that box which shone the brightest. Portia dreaded lest he should choose correctly, but she respected him and called him "noble Prince," even though his failure and consequent departure were for her a "gentle riddance."

Passages to be Carefully Studied for Characterization

MOROCCO REJECTS THE LEADEN CASKET

Morocco—Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross;
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

THE BLACK PRINCE TURNS FROM THE SILVER BOX

Morocco—What says the silver with her virgin hue?
 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
 As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
 And weigh thy value with an even hand:
 If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
 Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
 May not extend so far as to the lady:
 And yet to be afeard of my deserving
 Were but a weak disabling of myself.
 As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:
 I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
 In graces and in qualities of breeding;
 But more than these, in love I do deserve.
 What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?

THE MAN FROM AFRICA SELECTS THE GOLDEN CHEST

Morocco—Let's see once more this saying graved in gold;
 'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
 Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her;
 From the four corners of the earth they come,
 To kiss this shrine, this mortal breathing saint:
 The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
 Of wide Arabia are as thoroughfares now
 For princes to come view fair Portia:
 The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
 Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
 To stop the foreign spirits, but they come,
 As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.
 One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
 Is't like that lead contains her? 'T were damnation
 To think so base a thought: it were too gross
 To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
 Or shall I think in silver she's immured,
 Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?
 O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
 Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
 A coin that bears the figure of an angel,
 Stamped in gold, but that's insculp'd upon;

But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. Deliver me the key:
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

APPEARANCES ARE DECEIVING

All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.

Cold, indeed; and labor lost:
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.

Unusual Words and Phrases

discover—uncover

virgin hue—the silver of the moon, the shrine of
Diana, the virgin goddess

even—steady, balanced

disabling—undervalue

Hyrcanian deserts—in Asia, Hyrcania, a province of
the old Persian Empire

watery kingdom—the realms of the ocean

rib her cerecloth—bury her shroud

immured—sealed

a coin that bears the figure of an angel—the figure
of St. Michael slaying the dragon; these coins
were used in reign of Edward IV

a carrion death—Death's head; empty skull

part—depart

Act II

Scene 8

Story

Conversation between Salanio and Salarino reveals that Bassanio and Gratiano have sailed for Belmont, and that Shylock has been furiously demanding that their ship be searched for Jessica and Lorenzo. Antonio has assured the Duke that Bassanio is not aiding the elopement. Salanio tells that the Jew's outburst has been confused between love of his daughter and rage over the loss of his money and jewels. The wronged Shylock has bemoaned his fate until the boys of the city pursue him and mock his cry, "Oh, my daughter, my ducats!" Antonio's friends realize that the Jew's misfortune will make him relentless should any mischance hinder the return of Antonio's fleet by the time the forfeit of his bond falls due; and to make this possibility more dangerous is the news that some Venetian fleet has been lost at sea. Salanio and Salarino hasten to tell Antonio of the report, in case these may have been his ships. They recall how freely Antonio incurred a debt so that Bassanio could go to woo Portia, how generously he urged the lover to pursue his quest without thought for the Jew's heavy bond, and they are anxious in the interim to relieve Antonio's uneasy house.

Analysis

The climax has begun when Bassanio sails for Belmont, and the loss of Antonio's ships is rumored. His journey is the first actual step toward the success of the venture for which the money was borrowed and the story of Antonio's losses suggests how valuable the bond he gave to Shylock may become.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

AN EXCITED SHYLOCK

Salanio—I never heard a passion so **confus'd**,
 So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
 As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
 'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
 Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
 Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
 A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
 Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
 And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
 Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl!
 She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!'

THE PARTING OF TWO FRIENDS

Salarino—A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
 I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
 Bassanio told him he would make some speed
 Of his return: he answer'd, 'Do not so;
 Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
 But stay the very riping of the time;
 And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
 Let it not enter in your mind of love:
 Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
 To courtship and such fair ostents of love
 As shall conveniently become you there:
 And even there, his eye being big with tears,
 Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
 And with affection wondrous sensible
 He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

Unusual Words and Phrases

certify—assure

keep his day—meet the debt on the day it falls due

reasoned—talked

fraught—freighted

slubber—slur, do carelessly

ripping—fulfillment

ostents—demonstrations

conveniently—fittingly

sensible—sensitive

embraced heaviness—the sadness which he embraces

Act II

Scene 9

Story

In the casket-chamber of Portia's house, the Prince of Arragon, another brave suitor, makes his choice of the caskets, knowing that if he fail to pick the right one he must never again seek to marry, and must at once leave Portia's house. He refuses to risk all on so poor an offering as a casket of lead and disdains the gold because he does not want to be classed with the vulgar-bred. What many men desire is too ordinary, so he decides that the silver, being the honest stamp of merit, is as much as he deserves, and he chooses to open it. Within is not Portia's likeness, but a fool's head and the warning that fools being "silvered o'er" do ever make wrong choices. So, the Prince departs, to Portia's joy, and the approach of the next suitor, a young Venetian, is announced. His herald has made so favorable an impression that Nerissa prays Cupid to grant that this new-comer may be Bassanio.

Analysis

Portia's respect for the suitors who dare to make the choice of the caskets is reflected in her reception of the conceited Prince of Arragon. His false judgment does not alter his regard for the lady, and he bids her fond

adieu. Portia comments that he lost by his own wit—his absorption in himself, and unconcern about her own share in the fate of the boxes. This Prince erred in his judgment of his own deserts; Morocco in his conception of Portia's father's estimate of Portia. There is a notable difference between the Princes of Arragon and of Morocco, particularly displayed in the adieux of the two disappointed suitors. Two suitors have failed and Nerissa's maxim that hanging and wiving go by destiny, coming as it does, just before Bassanio is announced, adds to our suspense over his success.

Passages to be Studied

THE PORTRAIT OF ARRAGON

Arragon—I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:

First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 't was I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage:
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Portia—To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Arragon—And so have I address'd me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope! Gold; silver; and base lead.
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire
What many men desire! that 'many' may be meant
By the fool multitude; that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,

Because I will not jump with common spirits
 And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
 Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
 Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves';
 And well said too; for who shall go about
 To cozen fortune and be honorable
 Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
 To wear an undeserved dignity.
 O, that estates, degrees and offices
 Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honor
 Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
 How many then should cover that stand bare!
 How many be commanded that command!
 How much low peasantry would then be glean'd
 From the true seed of honor! and how much honor
 Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times
 To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:
 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
 I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
 And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

ARRAGON LEARNS OF HIS FAILURE

Arragon— What is here?
 [*Reads*] The fire seven times tried this:
 Seven times triéd that judgment is,
 That did never choose amiss.
 Some there be that shadows kiss;
 Such have but a shadow's bliss:
 There be fools alive, I wis,
 Silver'd oe'r; and so was this.
 Take what wife you will to bed,
 I will ever be your head:
 So be gone: you are sped.
 Still more fool I shall appear
 By the time I linger here:
 With one fool's head I came to woo,
 But I go away with two.
 Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
 Patiently to bear my wroth.

AN UNSYMPATHETIC PORTIA

Portia—Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
 O these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
 They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Unusual Words and Phrases

election—choice

presently—immediately

addressed—prepared

martlet—martin, swallow

cozen—cheat

schedule—notice

I wis—think

sped—rejected

wroth—disappointment

regreets—salutations, greetings of a suitable character, gifts

high-day—holiday, festival

mannerly—correctly, in such good form

Act III

Scene 1

Story

Salanio learns from Salarino that two of Antonio's fleets have been lost in the English Channel. Antonio's servant urges them to go to Antonio. Shylock continues to rage against the loss of his daughter and his money, and warns that Antonio had better "Look to his bond." Since the merchant's failure means further deprivation for Shylock himself, the Jew promises no mercy. Tubal, Shylock's friend, enters bringing rumors of Jessica's extravagance in Genoa.

Analysis

This is the second scene in the climax of the plot regarding Antonio. The rumor of his disaster brings

up the possibility of his fearful forfeit. Sympathy for Antonio is reflected in the vain wishes of Salarino and Salanio to aid him. But the sympathy Antonio's friends express for him is as nothing compared to that which stirs the reader for the Jew when he reads in the "To Bait Fish" speech, the insults Shylock has had heaped upon him by Antonio. In all Shakespeare there is no more passionate outburst than this. Nowhere in the play does Shylock reach the emotional eloquence he utters in this passage. Nor can there be found anywhere a more spirited denunciation of the folly of race prejudice, the narrowness of creeds and of man's inhumanity to man.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

REVENGE

Shylock—There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

Salarino—Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

Shylock—To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if

you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

SHYLOCK'S WOES

Shylock—Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

A TENDER SHYLOCK

Tubal—One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shylock—Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

AN INCONSISTENT SHYLOCK

Shylock—Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

*Unusual Words and Phrases**unchecked*—uncontradicted*narrow seas*—English Channel*knapped ginger*—chewed ginger root*Come, the full stop*—tell the whole story*fledged*—winged for flight*complexion*—tendency*Rhenish wine*—white wine*The curse*—a curse mentioned in Deuteronomy for
the Israelites who had broken the law*hearsed*—in her coffin*fee me an officer*—engage an officer for me

Act III

Scene 2

Story

Bassanio is anxious to make his choice of the caskets at once, so that he may know his fate; but Portia prefers that he delay because, if he should make a wrong choice, it would be necessary for him to leave at once. Portia tells him that if he truly loves her, he will choose the right box, and if he fails to choose rightly, he will make her wish she had never sworn to keep to herself the secret of the favorable choice. Bassanio chooses the lead casket, "which rather threatenest than dost promise aught"; within is Portia's picture and her father's approval of the suitor who should make this selection. Portia's ecstasy soars, and she gives her ring to her lover, admonishing him that he must wear it as long as his love for her remains constant. Another romance is consummated in Nerissa's betrothal to Gratiano, for Gratiano tells Bassanio that Nerissa had promised to marry him if Bassanio

chose the right casket. Their rejoicing is added to by the arrival of Jessica, Lorenzo and Salanio. Lorenzo explains that he and Jessica met Salanio on the road and that he urged them to accompany him to Belmont since he bore a letter from Antonio to Bassanio. Salanio supplements the bad news of Antonio's letter by saying that the Jew will accept no payment but the forfeiture, although many have offered their fortunes to Antonio; and Jessica tells how Shylock had declared that he would rather have Antonio's forfeit than twenty times the value of the debt. Antonio's letter assures Bassanio that he desires only to see him before the Jew must exact his bond, and Portia urges that her lover marry her at once, then set out immediately for Venice.

Analysis

This scene with Bassanio's success and Antonio's utter failure is the climax of the play. For both points the reader has been prepared. In Act III, Scene 1, Shylock had sent Tubal to fee an officer of the law as soon as the news of Antonio's first loss was spread, and even in the first lines of the play, Antonio's strange depression presages ill-fortune. Portia's lucky suitor, Bassanio, was pointed out in Act I, Scene 2, when Portia and Nerissa praised him above the others who had come to Belmont. The Prince of Morocco had chosen the gold casket and failed because he had placed too much confidence in outward appearances. The Prince of Arragon had failed by choosing the silver, in assuming too much credit for his deserts. When Bassanio comes, the reader feels hopeful for his success as his approach is so favorably heralded (Act II, Scene 9) and suspense is maintained by the device of having him meditate in silence over the

three caskets. Another interesting part of the scene is Bassanio's beautiful description of Portia. Shakespeare tells how her loveliness moved her lover, instead of how she appeared.

It may be that Portia managed to give Bassanio some clue to guide his choice by the song that was played while he pondered :

Tell me where is fancy bred,
In the heart or in the head?

* * * *

It is engender'd in the eyes
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

At any rate, Bassanio consulted deeper counsel than the fancy of his eyes in choosing the meagre lead casket. This happy climax in the love story is sharply contrasted by the sad fate that has befallen good Antonio. The arrival of Shylock's daughter is a master-stroke of preparation for the bitter news that Salanio brings, for the dark Jewish beauty with her unhappy past offers a decided contrast to the radiant Portia.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

PORTIA'S LOVE FOR MUSIC

Portia—Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch: such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear

And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
 With no less presence, but with much more love,
 Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
 The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
 To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;
 The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
 With bleared visages, come forth to view
 The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
 Live thou, I live: with much much more dismay
 I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

THE BEAUTY OF PORTIA

Bassanio—

What find I here?

[*Opening the leaden casket.*]

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
 Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
 Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
 Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,
 Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar
 Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
 The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
 A golden mesh t' entrap the hearts of men
 Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes!—
 How could he see to do them? having made one,
 Methinks it should have power to steal both his,
 And leave itself unfurnish'd.

THE FEELINGS OF A SUCCESSFUL LOVER

Bassanio—Like one of two contending in a prize,
 That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
 Hearing applause and universal shout,
 Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
 Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
 So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
 As doubtful whether what I see be true,
 Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

PORTIA'S PORTRAIT, BY HERSELF

Portia—You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
 Such as I am: though for myself alone

I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;

That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of nothing, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants and this same myself
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

THE SUCCESSFUL LOVER

Bassanio—Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence—
Oh, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

PORTIA SLIGHTS JESSICA

Gratiano—Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salanio: what's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

BASSANIO TURNS PALE

Portia—There are some shrewd contents in yon same
paper,
That steals the color from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.

BASSANIO'S CONFESSION

Bassanio— O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood.

SHYLOCK IMMOVABLE

Salerio— Not one, my lord.
 Besides, it should appear, that if he had
 The present money to discharge the Jew,
 He would not take it. Never did I know
 A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
 So keen and greedy to confound a man:
 He plies the duke at morning and at night,
 And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
 If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
 The duke himself, and the magnificoes
 Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
 But none can drive him from the envious plea
 Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.

SHYLOCK, BY JESSICA

Jessica—When I was with him I have heard him swear
 To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
 That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
 Than twenty times the value of the sum
 That he did owe him: and I know, my lord,
 If law, authority and power deny not,
 It will go hard with poor Antonio.

ANTONIO, A TRUE FRIEND

Portia—Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?
Bassanio—The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
 The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
 In doing courtesies, and one in whom
 The ancient Roman honor more appears
 Than any that draws breath in Italy.

MAGNANIMOUS PORTIA

Portia—What sum owes he the Jew?
Bassanio—For me three thousand ducats.
Portia— What, no more?
 Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
 Double six thousand, and then treble that,
 Before a friend of this description.

Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
 First go with me to church and call me wife,
 And then away to Venice to your friend;
 For never shall you lie by Portia's side
 With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
 To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
 When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
 My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
 Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
 For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:
 Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:
 Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
 But let me hear the letter of your friend.

ANTONIO FACES DEATH

Bassanio—[*Reads*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

Unusual Words and Phrases

hazard—attempt, risk

besprew your eyes—Chide your eyes

o'erlooked—cast a spell over

peise—retard

rack—device for torture

Dardanian—Trojan

excrement—beard

guiled—deceitful

Indian Beauty—a beauty which seems disagreeable
 because her complexion is dark

drudge 'tween man and man—money

counterfeit—picture
continent—container
magnificoes—nobles

Act III

Scene 3

Story

On a street of Venice, Antonio comes with his jailer to beg leniency of Shylock. The Jew spurns the plea, and warns Antonio that the Jewish dog is about to show his fangs. In his despair, Antonio's last hope is that Bassanio may arrive for a final greeting before the dire bond is exacted.

Analysis

This is the first scene in the decline after the climax of Act III, Scene 2. The trial of Antonio in the court of the Duke of Venice is foreshadowed when Salarino ventures the hope that the Duke will never affirm the legality of the Jew's demand; and when Antonio reminds him that the Duke cannot fail to protect the Jew since the justice of the state and the commercial life of Venice demand the protection of foreigners. The loyalty of Antonio's friends and Antonio's devotion to Bassanio are emphasized by Salarino's faithful attendance upon Antonio, and by Antonio's prayer that Bassanio may come to see him pay his debt.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

RELENTLESS REVENGE

Shylock—I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
 I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
 I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,

To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond.

ANTONIO TELLS OF THE GOOD HE HAS DONE

Antonio— Let him alone:
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

ANTONIO GIVES UP ALL HOPE

Antonio—The duke cannot deny the course of law,
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of the state:
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go:
These griefs and losses have so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!

Unusual Words and Phrases

gratis—free

naughty—wicked

fond—foolish

impenetrable—unapproachable

bootless—fruitless

made moan—moaned

commodity—convenience

bated—weakened, reduced

Act III

Scene 4

Story

In Portia's house, Lorenzo commends her generosity in sending Bassanio to Antonio on her wedding day, but he assures her that Antonio is well worthy of the consideration. Portia's reply expresses her confidence in the worthiness of her husband's friend, and she begs Lorenzo to assume charge of her house until Bassanio comes again to Belmont, since she has sworn to live with Nerissa in the quiet of the near-by monastery until Bassanio's return. She bids Lorenzo and Jessica adieu, then commissions her trusted servant Balthazar to speed to Padua and thence to Venice with the garments and letters which her cousin, Doctor Bellario, will give him. Portia intimates to Nerissa that they will see their husbands soon, but that their husbands will not recognize them in the men's attire which they will assume.

Analysis

This scene is preparation for the trial of Antonio. It is purely transitional, explaining by conversation rather than by action. It pays tribute to Portia in the speech of Lorenzo; to Bassanio in the speeches of Lorenzo and Portia, and further to Antonio in the same dialogue. Portia, having in mind her plan to go to Venice, shows, after Bassanio's leave, that unusual courage which Lorenzo noted. Especially is Portia's friendly intimacy with Lorenzo and Jessica to be observed. It is probable that her seeming neglect of them when they arrived at Belmont (Act III, Scene 2) was caused by her sympathy with Bassanio's grief for Antonio.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

PORTIA TRUSTS HER HOUSE TO LORENZO'S CARE

Portia—Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
 The husbandry and manage of my house
 Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
 I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
 To live in prayer and contemplation,
 Only attended by Nerissa here,
 Until her husband and my lord's return:
 There is a monastery two miles off;
 And there we will abide. I do desire you
 Not to deny this imposition,
 The which my love and some necessity
 Now lays upon you.

PORTIA PLAYS A GIRLISH ROLE

Portia— I'll hold thee any wager,
 When we are both accoutred like young men,
 I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
 And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
 And speak between the change of man and boy
 With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
 Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
 Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
 How honorable ladies sought my love,
 Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
 I could not do withal; then I'll repent,
 And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them;
 And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
 That men shall swear I have discontinued school
 Above a twelvemonth.

*Unusual Words and Phrases**conceit*—idea, conception*amity*—friendship, love*waste the time*—pass the time*husbandry*—stewardship, management

imposition—responsibility

endeavor—effort

imagined—imaginable

trancet—common ferry

trades—crosses

convenient—suitable

habit—costume and air

accoutred—dressed

I could not do withal—I could not help it

Act III

Scene 5

Story

After Portia's departure, Launcelot (who came on in Bassanio's train) discusses with Jessica her probable fate: perhaps Shylock is not her true father, and so she may have a chance to enter heaven. But Jessica amusedly reminds him that he is seeking solution for her in a worse offense from her mother than the possession of an ostracized faith. For her own account, Jessica suggests that she shall find salvation in her conversion to Christianity by her husband, but this calls forth only a lament from Launcelot because the increasing number of Christians is "causing the price of pork to rise." Lorenzo and Launcelot engage in a humorous battle of wits before Launcelot goes to obey Lorenzo's direction concerning the household. Then in response to Lorenzo's query regarding her opinion of Portia, Jessica affirms the "poor, rude world hath not her fellow."

Analysis

This comic relief before the great trial of Antonio serves the familiar double purpose of affording relaxation between two tense situations, and again shows Shakespeare's masterful handling of "low comedy." At the end of the scene, the reader sees the change that her new environment is creating in Jessica. Her praise of Portia shows that she is less of a self-centered lonely girl, and more of a considerate young woman, capable of appreciating nobility and merit wherever she meets it.

Passages to be Studied

LAUNCELOT'S AFFECTED VOCABULARY

Lorenzo—O dear discretion, how his words are suited!

The fool hath, planted in his memory,
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricky word
Defy the matter.

JESSICA EXTOLS PORTIA'S CHARACTER

Jessica—

It is very meet

The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other, for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

LORENZO, A HAPPY HUSBAND

Lorenzo—

Even such a husband

Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

*Unusual Words and Phrases**I fear you*—I fear for you*bastard*—unfounded*Scylla and Charybdis*—a rock and a whirlpool in a strait between Sicily and Italy. According to the myth, a siren dwelt on the rock and a monster in the whirlpool*enow*—enough*cover*—lay covers for dinner, and Launcelot plays upon the word as it also means *to put on one's hat**humours*—whims*conceits*—ideas*defy the matter*—lose the meaning*meet*—proper*pawn*—match

Act IV

Scene 1

Story

The scene is in the court room of Venice, where the Jew has entered his suit to gain Antonio's forfeit. The Duke's suggestion that Shylock will, at this last minute, act mercifully toward his debtor, is spurned by the frenzied old man, for the one reason that he hates Antonio. Bassanio urges that all men do not kill those whom they do not love, but Shylock's reply is that men would do so if the possibility were presented. Antonio begs Bassanio to hasten the judgment, and to abandon his vain pleading with the Jew. Bassanio's offer of double payment of the bond is refused, and Shylock once more demands the forfeit. The Duke is at loss to decide, when the doctor from Padua is announced. Nerissa, impersonating the doctor's messenger, enters first. Once a

plea for Antonio is presented, this time by Gratiano, but the Jew whets his knife and reiterates his demand for the forfeit. At this moment, the Duke reads to the court a letter which Nerissa has brought ostensibly from Doctor Bellario. The letter states that Bellario is ill and is sending in his own place, Balthasar, a most accomplished young doctor of Rome. This young lawyer, Portia in reality, is admitted as defender of Antonio. At first, Portia urges that the Jew be merciful, then as the old demand for payment of the forfeit is renewed, the young doctor wins Shylock's praise of "a Daniel come to judgment" when she affirms that the Jew's demand for justice must be met. Bassanio desperately vows that his own body shall be sacrificed before the Jew harm noble Antonio; the weary Antonio asks only that the judgment be hastened, and that Bassanio never regret the end to which ill fate has brought his friend.

Shylock's exultation is quenched, however, when the learned doctor reminds him that the law allows him not one drop of the prisoner's blood, and that his goods shall all be confiscated if he violates the terms of the law in extracting from Antonio the forfeit of one pound of flesh. Shylock refuses to take his forfeit in the face of such restrictions and it is now Gratiano's turn to praise the "Daniel come to judgment." Yet further deprivation is in store for the Jew. Portia notifies him that there is a severe penalty against an alien who threatens the life of a citizen of Venice; that one-half of Shylock's goods are forfeited to Antonio, that the other half must go to the state; and that his life lies in the hands of the Duke who is presiding over the court. Bassanio's offer of the three thousand is not permitted. Shylock, the old man, faces a bitter penalty for his attempted vengeance; but the Duke declines to take his

life and Antonio asks only that he be granted use of the Jew's money as investment to revive his fortunes, that Shylock adopt the Christian faith, and that at his death his remaining fortunes shall all revert to Lorenzo and Jessica.

Shylock leaves the court. Portia declines the Duke's invitation to his house on the plea that she must return at once to Padua. In gratitude, Bassanio begs the learned "Doctor" to accept the money which he had planned to pay to Shylock; Antonio expresses his hearty thanks; but Portia asks only a remembrance, not payment. From Antonio she accepts his gloves, but from Bassanio she begs the ring which he wears. When Bassanio demurs (because the ring had been given to him by his bride) the learned doctor starts away. Antonio urges Bassanio to give the ring to their benefactor, confident of his wife's understanding the circumstances, and Bassanio does so, sending the ring after the doctor by Gratiano.

Analysis

This is the catastrophe of the drama, built upon a scene of dramatic, not legal, justice. Both main and sub-plots are concerned, since Antonio and Bassanio are in court first to meet the Jew, and Portia appears to save them and to turn vengeance back upon the avenger. Shylock is denied his forfeit, and refused the bond which he had publicly rejected at first: all his goods are subject to confiscation; and, as the worst of tortures, he is commanded to abandon his own faith for that of the Christians whom he hates.

This last demand upon the old man seems incomprehensible unless one remembers how extreme had been

Antonio's suffering pending the decision, or unless one feels that Antonio really believed the Christian faith would alter Shylock's embittered spirit. It hardly seems that the noble Antonio was seeking only vengeance, since he refused to accept outright the share of Shylock's property which the court awarded him. Portia's understanding of Shylock's nature and her handling of the case show more of the mastery of Shakespeare. Shylock's exultation and Antonio's despair are suddenly reversed just when the suspense over the outcome of the trial seems almost unbearable. Shylock's absolute wretchedness evidences itself when this one-time jubilant plaintiff drags himself off to his empty, cheerless home begging that the papers for the surrender of his property be sent after him. Antonio's emotional strain is expressed as he offers two short comments of gratitude to Portia, along with Bassanio's more eloquent responses.

With the fortunate ending of the trial scene, the tragic element of the plot is eliminated. One feels pity for the lonely, broken Shylock, and joy for the lovers and for Antonio. The episode of the trial displays Portia's intelligence and sharp mental ability; but it also enhances her grace and charm, for, while she plays the brilliant lawyer, she is still dignified, courteous, and modest. Even in her man's disguise she never loses her feminine grace. Her adieu to the Duke might have been expressed in the same terms had she been in her own character, and her gentle refusal of a fee from Bassanio and Antonio, with her persistent coaxing for possession of her husband's ring, are the familiar ways of Portia of Belmont.

The central interest of the play is now swung from the sub-plot, which has to do with Antonio's dangerous bargain, to the main plot, which is concerned with the love story. The reader is now much more interested in Bas-

sanio, Portia and Antonio, than with Bassanio, Shylock and Antonio.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

SHAKESPEARE ERRS IN THINKING VENICE A SUBJECT STATE

Shylock—I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.

SHYLOCK'S HATRED AND LOATHING TOWARDS ANTONIO

Shylock—You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humor: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
And others, at the bagpipe; for affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
Why he, a woollen bagpipe;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

ANTONIO MINUS HIS NAGGING, SPITTING AND SPURNING

Antonio—I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf

Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do anything most hard,
As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?—
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no further means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgment and the Jew his will.

THE LOGIC OF SHYLOCK UNANSWERABLE

Shylock—What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchas'd slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them: shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer,
'The slaves are ours.'—So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 't is mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

HOW PORTIA WAS ABLE TO ACT AS JUDGE

Clerk—[*Reads*] Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let

his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

PROBABLY THE FINEST PASSAGE IN THE PLAY IS THIS
PLEA FOR MERCY

Portia—The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy season justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

PORTIA AGAIN PLEADS FOR MERCY

Portia— Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

PORTIA ASKS SHYLOCK TO SHOW SOME CHARITY

Portia—Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds lest he do bleed to death.

Shylock—Is it so nominated in the bond?

Portia—It is not so express'd: but what of that?

'Twere good you do so much for charity.

ANTONIO PREPARES FOR DEATH

Antonio—Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
 For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
 Than is her custom: it is still her use
 To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
 To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
 An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
 Of such misery doth she cut me off.
 Commend me to your honorable wife:
 Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
 Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
 And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
 Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
 Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
 And he repents not that he pays your debt;
 For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
 I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

PORTIA USES A QUIBBLE TO DEFEAT SHYLOCK

Portia—Tarry a little; there is something else.

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
 The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh':
 Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
 But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
 One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
 Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
 Unto the state of Venice.

PORTIA, A HARSH JUDGE

Portia—Tarry, Jew:

The law hath yet another hold on you.
 It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
 If it be proved against an alien
 That by direct or indirect attempts
 He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st:
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

ANTONIO LEARNS NOTHING FROM HIS OWN SUFFERING

Antonio—So please my lord the duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content,—so he will let me have
The other half in use,—to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favor,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd of
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

A BROKEN SHYLOCK

Shylock—I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

PORTIA TESTS BASSANIO

Bassanio—Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further:
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Portia—You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[*To Antonio*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them
for your sake;

[*To Bassanio*] And for your love, I'll take this ring from you:

Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bassanio—This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!

I will not shame myself to give you this.

Portia—I will have nothing else but only this;

And now methinks I have a mind to it.

Bassanio—There's more depends on this than on the value.

The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,

And find it out by proclamation:

Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

Portia—I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:

You taught me first to beg; and now methinks

You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

Bassanio—Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;

And when she put it on, she made me vow

That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

Portia—That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.

An if your wife be not a mad-woman,

And know how well I have deserved the ring,

She would not hold out enemy for ever,

For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*]

Antonio—My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:

Let his deservings and my love withal

Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

Bassanio—Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;

Give him the ring, and bring him, if thou canst,

Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste.

[*Exit Gratiano.*]

Come, you and I will thither presently;

And in the morning early will we both

Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.*]

Unusual Words and Phrases

dram—small unit of apothecary's measure

moiety—small portion

enow—enough

possessed—informed fully

carrion—worthless

baned—barred or poisoned

losing suit—one in which he loses money for the sake
of taking flesh from his enemy

current—tide, trend

think you question—remember you are arguing

main—ocean

bate—lessen

fretten—troubled

tainted—diseased

wether—ram

Pythagoras—Greek philosopher who preached trans-
migration of souls

Daniel—referring to a story in the Apocrypha, tell-
ing of Daniel's shrewd judgment

Act IV

Scene 2

Story

After leaving the court, Portia bids Nerissa hasten to Shylock for his signature of the legal papers. She is anxious to return to Belmont before Bassanio and Gratiano. While Portia is instructing Nerissa, Gratiano hastens to them with the ring which Bassanio has sent after his wife, the doctor of Padua, as he supposes her to be. Portia accepts the ring, declines Bassanio's invitation to dinner, and asks Gratiano to show "her clerk" the way to Shylock's house. Nerissa and Portia whisper of the amusement they will have if "the clerk" is able to secure from Gratiano the ring which Nerissa gave him when he left Belmont with Bassanio.

Analysis

In this scene the main plot is actually resumed, and a plan is laid whereby Portia and Nerissa will eventually enjoy proving their presence at the trial. The inspiration for this little intrigue against Bassanio and Gratiano comes from Portia's quick wit and is adopted by Nerissa. Portia is anxious to reach Belmont before her husband does, so that he may not guess the reason for her absence, but she was, in all probability, anxious to discard her disguise, now that it has served its purpose. For note again, Portia, as all of Shakespeare's heroines, is essentially feminine. This bit of comedy scene prepares for the happy ending of the play.

Act V

Story

Out of doors, in the avenue to Portia's house in Belmont, Lorenzo and Jessica are awaiting the return of their host and hostess. They are recalling other lovers who long ago enjoyed such lovely moonlight, when they are approached by a messenger who announces Portia's imminent return, and by Launcelot who informs them that Bassanio will arrive before the morning.

Portia's messenger is dispatched to prepare a welcome for the travellers, but Lorenzo and Jessica remain outside to hear sweet music under the stars. Portia and Nerissa drawing near to the house hear the music and see the candle-light from the halls. Portia is moved to comment that the stillness and darkness make these signs of home especially dear, as all good things appear at their best when they are free from comparison with the less attractive. Lorenzo and Jessica, still believing that Portia and

Nerissa have been to the neighboring monastery, welcome them with the news that Bassanio and Gratiano will arrive before morning.

Portia has just urged Nerissa to bid the servants make no mention of their mistress's absence from home, when Bassanio and Gratiano appear, accompanied by Antonio. Greetings are exchanged, Antonio being made especially welcome. Then Nerissa notices that Gratiano has not the ring which she gave to him. She appears to doubt that he gave it to a judge's clerk. Portia joins Nerissa in discomfoting poor Gratiano, and calls upon Bassanio to show his ring, in testimony that he has been true to his promise never to part with it. Bassanio is desperate for an excuse, but Gratiano assures Portia that her husband has given his ring to the great judge who saved Antonio. Portia at first falls in with Nerissa's mischievous taunt that the rings have been given to women, and not to men. Portia's suggestion that she, in turn, might prove yielding to the judge were she to meet him, moves Antonio to intercede for wretched Bassanio. Portia, pretending that she is reluctantly won over, gives the ring back to Bassanio, bidding him guard it more carefully.

In reply to her husband's wonder at her possession of the jewel, Portia presents a letter from Doctor Bellario explaining that she and Nerissa were the doctor and clerk at the trial of Antonio and Shylock. She calls Lorenzo to verify the fact that she and Nerissa have just returned from Venice. But especially welcome is the news that she brings to Antonio and to Lorenzo. By some secret channel Portia has learned that all of Antonio's ships are safe and to Lorenzo she gives the news of the disposition of Shylock's fortune, providing for

Jessica's inheritance of her father's property. Gratiano's is the last word in the play—his greatest fear for the future is the careful guarding of Nerissa's ring.

Analysis

Portia is the central figure of the last act of the play, revealing a final step in the development of her character. In the second scene of Act I, she was a discontented girl "a-weary of this great world"; in Act II, when her many suitors try the choice of the caskets, her intuition and womanly grace begin to manifest their power; in the trial scene, she displays her love of generosity and mercy, and her exceptional ability, although she never loses her feminine dignity; to Bassanio she gives whole-hearted loyalty from the minute he is successful in his choice of the lead casket; in the exchange and confusion of the incident of the rings, her ready, spontaneous wit predominates, and her mischievous mood tests to the utmost Bassanio's true love. At last safe at home after the trial, Portia is seen as the charming lady of a wealthy house—gay, affectionate, loyal and gentle. Portia and Bassanio, on one hand, and Bassanio and Antonio, on the other, are Shakespeare's examples of the beauty of love; first, love of man and woman, and second, affectionate loyalty of two men. Antonio is the link between the lovers. It was he who made Bassanio's courtship possible. In his defense Portia proves her devotion to Bassanio's honor. He was the instigator of Bassanio's surrendering Portia's ring and also he was the mediator who effected the charming reconciliation with the restoration of the ring to Bassanio.

The last scene closes without exciting action, leaving an impression of music, moonlight, love and peace, in contrast to the under-current of sadness with which the

play was opened. Gratiano and Nerissa are happy, and Lorenzo and Jessica have been aided by their good friends. Antonio has been spared the great sacrifice toward which the service of friendship had seemed to carry him, under the vengeance of grief-maddened Shylock; Bassanio and Portia are enriched by their love and by the fidelity of their many friends. What of Shylock? We hear of him no more after Nerissa secured his signature to the deed of his fortunes. His is the tragedy within the comedy plot.

The play itself is balanced on both sides of the climax: in Act III Antonio's losses are announced, the Jew makes plans to extract his bond, Bassanio makes his choice of the caskets in the hope of winning Portia; the play opens in a sad note and ends in a merry one. It is truly a tragi-comedy—the Jew's tragedy; the Christian's comedy.

Passages to be Studied and Memorized

LOVELY NIGHT

Lorenzo—The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jessica— In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
And ran dismay'd away.

Lorenzo— In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jessica— In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lorenzo— In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

Jessica— In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.

Lorenzo— In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jessica—I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

MOONLIGHT AT BELMONT

Lorenzo—How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this
bank!

Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

THE POWER OF MUSIC

Lorenzo—The reason is, your spirits are attentive:
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet

Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods ;
 Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
 But music for the time doth change his nature.
 The man that hath no music in himself,
 Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
 Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils ;
 The motions of his spirit are dull as night
 And his affections dark as Erebus :
 Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

PERSONALITY ECLIPSES MEDIOCRITY

Portia—A substitute shines brightly as a king,
 Until a king be by ; and then his state
 Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
 Into the main of waters.

TIME AND PLACE INFLUENCE EVERYTHING

Portia—The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark
 When neither is attended ; and I think
 The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
 When every goose is cackling, would be thought
 No better a musician than the wren.
 How many things by season season'd are
 To their right praise and true perfection !—

PORTIA DESCRIBES A MOONLIGHT NIGHT

Portia—This night methinks is but the daylight sick ;
 It looks a little paler ; 'tis a day,
 Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

HUMBLE BASSANIO

Bassanio—Sweet Portia,
 If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
 If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
 And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
 And how unwillingly I left the ring,
 When nought would be accepted but the ring,
 You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

A TANTALIZING PORTIA

Portia—If you had known the virtue of the ring,
 Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
 Or your own honor to contain the ring,
 You would not then have parted with the ring.
 What man is there so much unreasonable,
 If you had pleased to have defended it
 With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
 To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
 Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
 I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

A DELIGHTFUL PORTIA

Portia— Antonio, you are welcome;
 And I have better news in store for you
 Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
 There you shall find, three of your argosies
 Are richly come to harbor suddenly.
 You shall not know by what strange accident
 I chanced on this letter.

Antonio—Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
 For here I read for certain that my ships
 Are safely come to road.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Troilus and Cressida—Troilus, a Trojan, son of Priam, loved Cressida. She was taken by the Greeks in exchange of prisoners but swore fidelity to Troilus. In Greece she forgot her vow and grew to love Diomedes, the particular enemy of Troilus. Troilus at last met death by the hand of Achilles

Pyramus and Thisbe—two lovers in Greek legend. When Thisbe arrived at their meeting place before Pyramus, she was frightened away by a lion. Pyramus, upon his arrival, found a blood-

stained scarf and believing that Thisbe had been killed, he stabbed himself. Thisbe returned to the place, discovered that Pyramus was dead, and she too seeks death. Shakespeare uses a burlesque on this story in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Dido—Queen of Carthage. When deserted by the Trojan Æneas, Dido killed herself

Medea—enchantress who aided Jason's quest for the golden fleece and sought to bring him power

patines—gold plates used in communion service in the church

quiring—choiring, singing

muddy vesture of decay—human body

Diana—goddess of the moon

mutual—general

Orpheus—god of music

Erebus—underworld of the dead

Endymion—a beautiful youth beloved by Diana.

She carried him to perpetual sleep on a mountain top, so that she could always see his beauty and youth

scant—cut short

posy—rhyme

respective—careful, thoughtful

contain—hold

modesty—restraint, moderation

wealth—welfare

miscarried—been carried off

JULIUS CAESAR ANALYZED

PERSONS REPRESENTED

JULIUS CÆSAR,	
OCTAVIUS CÆSAR,	
MARCUS ANTONIUS,	} triumvirs after the death of Julius Cæsar
M. ÆMIL. LEPIDUS,	
CICERO,	
PUBLIUS,	
POPILIUS LENA,	} senators
MARCUS BRUTUS,	
CASSIUS,	
CASCA,	
TREBONIUS,	} conspirators against Julius Cæsar
LIGARIUS,	
DECIUS BRUTUS,	
METELLUS CIMBER,	
CINNA,	
FLAVIUS and MARULLUS, tribunes	
ARTEMIDORUS of Cnidos, a teacher of Rhetoric	
A Soothsayer	
CINNA, a poet.	Another Poet.
LUCILIUS,	} friends to Brutus and Cassius
TITINIUS,	
MESSALA,	
YOUNG CATO,	
VOLUMNIUS,	
VARRO,	} servants to Brutus
CLITUS,	
CLAUDIUS,	
STRATO,	
LUCIUS,	
DARDANIUS,	
PINDARUS, servant to Cassius	
CALPURNIA, wife to Cæsar	
PORTIA, wife to Brutus	

Senators, Citizens, Guards, Attendants, &c.

SCENE: *Rome; the neighborhood of Sardis; the neighborhood of Philippi*

JULIUS CÆSAR ANALYZED

Act I

Scene 1

Story

Scene 1 opens with Flavius and Marullus, the tribunes, rebuking the mob as they shout strenuously for Cæsar in his triumph. They resent Cæsar's attempt to gain the good will of the rabble to advance his own autocratic ideas, and they attempt to throw cold water upon Cæsar's show by muzzling his chief supporters—the mob.

Analysis

In the eighty lines of this scene, Shakespeare describes a quarrel between the fickle followers of Cæsar, who support his autocracy, and the dead-in-earnest tribunes, who represent the democratic spirit of Rome. This dispute increases until it becomes a great battle between the absolute power of Cæsar and the government by the people. Shakespeare also gives his opinion of the fickleness and ingratitude of the mob in bold terms.

SHAKESPEARE DESPISES THE MOB

Marullus—Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings
he home?

What tributaries follow him to Rome

To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?

You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless
things!

O, you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,

Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft

Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,

To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The live-long day with patient expectation
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome;
And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks
To hear the replication of your sounds
Made in her concave shores?
And do you now put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood?
Be gone!
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

What are you shouting and exulting about? What riches does Cæsar bring to Rome with this show? What kings or queens, what princes or princesses follow in his train to fill the general coffers with their ransom? You show that you are stupid as the blocks and stones and more senseless to honor this empty man with a triumph. How hard-hearted, how cruel and how fickle are ye men of Rome. Have you all forgotten Pompey? How often have you stood from morn till night, at windows, on towers, on walls wherever you could find a place to see great Pompey pass in triumph through the streets of Rome? At his appearance have you not sent forth such a shout that made old Tiber tremble underneath her banks? How cheap, how small, how contemptible you are now to dress up in your best clothes, to waste your precious time in strewing praise and flowers in the path

of this Cæsar, who shamelessly comes here in triumph, not over foreigners but over the blood of Pompey's sons! Get out of my sight, rubbish that you are. Fly to your houses, crawl on your knees and beg the gods to save you from the wrath which should consume such ungrateful wretches as you are.

Unusual Words and Phrases

mechanical—working with tools

cobbler—a clumsy workman

knave—a menial

awl—a shoemaker's tool for punching holes

neat—an ox

replication—a reverbation, echo

ceremonies—sacred observances

Act I

Scene 2

Story

Cæsar, Antony, Calpurnia, Portia, Cicero, Brutus, Cassius and Casca meet in a public place to observe the services of the Feast of the Lupercal. The ceremonies are interrupted at the beginning by a Soothsayer who warns Cæsar, "Beware the Ides of March." Dismissing the prophet as a dreamer as soon as he glances at him, Cæsar and the crowd pass on, while Cassius keeps Brutus behind to tell him that Cæsar is a menace to the Republic. Later, Cæsar returns with Antony and as they pass Cassius and Brutus, Cæsar whispers to Antony his celebrated characterization of the "lean and hungry Cassius." With Cæsar and Antony out of the way, Casca joins Brutus and Cassius, describes the order of events at the games and tells them that Antony thrice offered a crown

to Cæsar, that Cæsar refused it each time, that Cæsar fainted, fell down, foamed at the mouth and was speechless, that Cicero spoke Greek and that Marullus and Flavius, the tribunes, had been deprived of their offices because they had pulled the scarfs from Cæsar's images.

Alone, Cassius soliloquizes and decides to trick Brutus into joining the conspiracy by throwing forged writings into the latter's windows. The letters will pretend to be from several citizens who call on Brutus to overthrow Cæsar.

Analysis

This scene is a very important one. It begins by making Antony the willing satellite of Cæsar. By repeating the Soothsayer's warning three times it designates the Ides of March as an eventful day. Next, it portrays Cæsar as a pretender. It makes him dismiss a friend as a dreamer and closes his eyes to the murderous villains who hover round him. Painting Cassius as envious, Brutus as patriotic, Casca as dense and Cæsar as superstitious, egotistical, fretful, suspicious, weak and epileptic, it reveals the chief characteristics which each displays throughout the drama.

Passages to be Memorized

THE TRUE PATRIOT

Brutus—What is it that you would impart to me?
If it be aught toward the general good,
Set honor in one eye and death i' the other,
And I will look on both indifferently,
For let the gods so speed me as I love
The name of honor more than I fear death.

A PORTRAIT OF CÆSAR

Cassius—Well, honor is the subject of my story.
I cannot tell what you and other men
Think of this life; but, for my single self,
I had as lief not be as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself.
I was born free as Cæsar; so were you:
We both have fed as well, and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he:
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
Cæsar said to me "Darest thou, Cassius, now
Leap in with me into this angry flood,
And swim to yonder point?" Upon the word,
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in
And bade him follow; so, indeed, he did.
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy;
But ere we could arrive the point proposed,
Cæsar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"
I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Cæsar: and this man
Is now become a god, and Cassius is
A wretched creature and must bend his body,
If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.
He had a fever when he was in Spain,
And, when the fit was on him, I did mark
How he did shake: 't is true, this god did shake:
His coward lips did from their color fly,
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
Did lose his lustre: I did hear him groan:
Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
Mark him and write his speeches in their books,
Alas, it cried, "Give me some drink, Titinius,"
As a sick girl. Ye gods! it doth amaze me,
A man of such feeble a temper should

So get the start of the majestic world
And bear the palm alone.

Brutus—Another general shout!

I do believe that these applauses are
For some new honors that are heap'd on Cæsar.

Cassius—Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world

Like a Colossus, and we petty men

Walk under his huge legs and peep about

To find ourselves dishonorable graves.

Men at some time are masters of their fates.

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

Brutus and Cæsar: what should be in that "Cæsar"?

Why should that name be sounded more than yours?

Write them together, yours is as fair a name;

Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;

Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,

Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar.

Now, in the names of all the gods at once,

Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,

That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!

When went there by an age, since the great flood,

But it was famed with more than with one man?

When could they say till now, that talk'd of Rome,

That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?

Now is it Rome indeed and room enough,

When there is in it but one only man.

O, you and I have heard our fathers say,

There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd

Th' eternal devil to keep his state in Rome

As easily as a king.

A PAINTING WHICH WILL NEVER LOSE ITS LUSTRE

Cæsar—Let me have men about me that are fat:

Sleek-headed men and such as sleep o' nights:

Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look;

He thinks too much: such men are dangerous.

Antony—Fear him not, Cæsar; he's not dangerous;

He is a noble Roman and well given.

Cæsar—Would he were fatter ! But I fear him not :
 Yet if my name were liable to fear,
 I do not know the man I should avoid
 So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much ;
 He is a great observer and he looks
 Quite through the deeds of men ; he loves no plays,
 As thou dost, Antony ; he hears no music ;
 Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort
 As if he mock'd himself and scorn'd his spirit
 That could be moved to smile at anything.
 Such men as he be never at heart's ease
 Whiles they behold a greater than themselves,
 And therefore are they very dangerous.
 I rather tell thee what is to be fear'd
 Than what I fear ; for always I am Cæsar.
 Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,
 And tell me truly what thou think'st of him.

Unusual Words and Phrases

course—race

soothsayer—a prophet

ceremony—a religious rite

the press—the crowd

Ides of March—the 15th of March

a dreamer—a visionary fellow

sennet—a set of notes on a trumpet as a signal for
 a procession to march

gamesome—sportful

veiled my look—hid my face

merely—altogether

vexed—troubled

give some soil—some foundation

your shadow—your image

jealous on me—jealous of me

to stale—to make cheap or insipid

every new protester—every newcomer

rout—a disorderly following or crowd, mob
speed—prosper, bless
favor—appearance, face
had as lief—would just as soon
lusty—strenuous
chafing—rubbing
bend—look
Titinius—a great friend of Cassius
temper—spirit
palm—reward
Colossus—a huge bronze statue at Rhodes one hundred and two feet high
shamed—disgraced
brook'd—endured
o' nights—at night
chanced—happened
rabblement—the mob
fain—gladly
falling-sickness—epilep
doublet—the English name for a man's jacket. It was never worn by Romans
bear me hard—has a grudge against me
hands—handwritings
we will shake him—we will depose him

Act I

Scene 3

Story

The curtain goes up and exhibits a violent thunder-storm which seems to rock Rome with its strange omens. Casca meets Cicero and tells him he has never seen a tempest dropping fire till then. Cicero philosophically

asks him if he had seen anything more wonderful than usual. Enumerating such omens as a slave on fire whose hands were not even scorched; the agreeable lion that met him opposite the Capitol and didn't annoy him; the group of ghastly women who swore they saw men all in fire walking up and down the streets; and the hooting and shrieking of the owls at midday in the market place, Casca shows that he is superstitious and that he thinks the omens have some relation to Rome. Amused, Cicero tells Casca that it's a bad night to be out walking and leaves him.

A moment later Cassius comes along unmindful of the storm, greets the nervous Casca and tells him that the elements in a ferment are merely instruments of fear and warning unto some monstrous state such as has been created in Rome by Cæsar who resembles this dreadful night that thunders, lightnings, opens graves and roars as loth the lion in the Capitol. Casca is convinced by Cassius that Romans have grievances to redress and to obtain that redress, agrees to set his foot "as far as who goes farthest."

Cinna joins the two, and all three plan to make Brutus a conspirator.

Analysis

Shakespeare uses the tempest in this scene to suggest the political struggle that is raging in Rome. That the night was nothing more than one of the violent changes that takes place on or before the twentieth of March can be readily conjectured from the language Cicero and Cassius use regarding it.

Casca then catalogues enough strange happenings to denote the ending of the world and states he believes

them portentous unto the climate that they point upon. Cicero, who hates Cæsar, states that it is a strange-disposed time, and that men may construe things after their fashion, clean from the purpose of the things themselves. Then, to excite the foggy mind of Casca still more and to strengthen the idea that there is some connection between the storm and the government, he innocently asks Casca, "Comes Cæsar to the Capitol tomorrow?" Later, when Casca starts talking about the weather to Cassius, the latter explains that he, an honest man, did not fear the tempest because he knew it was a warning to a tyrant like Cæsar.

A second purpose of the scene is to advance the action of the story. It is in this scene that the reader learns of Cassius' bargain with some of the noblest-minded Romans to undergo with him an enterprise of honorable dangerous consequences.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Brought you Cæsar home?—Did you go home with Cæsar?

not sensible—without sensation or feeling

against—near

bird of night—the owl

prodigies—wonders

climate—place

construe—explain

what night—what a night

submitting me—exposing myself

unbraced—loose fitting

thunder-stone—the thunderbolt

cross—zigzag

monstrous state—unnatural state

prodigious—marvelous, portentous

strange eruptions—outbreaks of nature

sufferance—the patience we show

trash—useless garbage

fleering—sneering

be factious—be earnest

Pompey's Porch—the portico to Pompey's Theatre

incorporate to our attempt—united with us

hie—hasten

alchemy—the art which professed to turn common metals into gold

Act II

Scene 1

Story

The opening of this scene pictures Brutus as an ideal master talking to his servant Lucius. Alone, Brutus falls into a melancholy soliloquy and debates whether Cæsar shall die. Lucius reenters with one of the forged papers which Cassius has thrown into Brutus' orchard. Brutus reads it, thinks it genuine and feeling that Rome calls him decides to put Cæsar out of the way.

At the heels of this decision, the six conspirators knock at his door wearing masks and are admitted at once. Brutus assumes leadership, decides Cicero shall not be a member, and blocks Cassius' effort to have Mark Antony killed with Cæsar. Next, Decius Brutus promises to bring Cæsar to the Capitol on the following day. Brutus, after agreeing to persuade Caius Ligarius to join their party, bids them good morrow.

No sooner have they departed than his wife demands to know what he is doing and why he acts of late so strangely toward her. Then Caius Ligarius calls and decides to follow Brutus into whatever enterprise he wishes to enter.

Analysis

As this scene contains Brutus' reasons for killing Cæsar, Decius' famous description of Cæsar and the sketch of Portia, it is famous. If it were just to destroy men in public life for what they might do under certain circumstances, many of our public men would lose their lives even to-day. One concludes after reading Brutus' soliloquy in this scene that he was either very stupid or else he wished to advance himself under a cloak of patriotism for he really hadn't any more cause to murder Cæsar than the Kaiser had in 1914 to plunge Europe into a senseless World War. Decius Brutus' characterization of Cæsar as weak and vacillating is celebrated because it is so inconsistent with Cæsar's opinion of himself in Act III when he says, "I am constant as the Northern Star." Nor can any one read the interesting dialogue between Brutus and his true and honorable wife without knowing that she foreshadowed the modern woman.

Passages to be Memorized

A RESTLESS SOUL

Brutus—Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream:
The genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

AN ARTISTIC MURDER IS PREFERABLE TO A CRUEL ONE

Brutus—Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds:
And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,

Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
And after seem to chide 'em.

THE BLESSING OF TRANQUIL SLEEP

Brutus—Boy! Lucius! Fast asleep? It is no matter;
Enjoy the heavy honey-dew of slumber:
Thou hast no figures nor no fantasies,
Which busy care draws in the brains of men;
Therefore thou sleep'st so sound.

THE IDEAL WIFE

Portia—If this were true, then should I know this secret.
I grant I am a woman; but withal
A woman that Lord Brutus took to wife:
I grant I am a woman; but withal
A woman well-reputed, Cato's daughter.
Think you I am no stronger than my sex,
Being so father'd and so husbanded?
Tell me your counsels, I will not disclose 'em:
I have made strong proof of my constancy,
Giving myself a voluntary wound
Here in the thigh: can I bear that with patience,
And not my husband's secrets?

Unusual Words and Phrases

orchard—garden

"When, Lucius, when"—exclamation denoting impatience

for the general—for the people taken together

proof—experience

quarrel—cause

exhalations—meteors

I make thee promise—I promise thee

phantasma—a dream, a vision

genius and the mortal instruments—the soul and the agents of the body

favor—appearance

youthful season—spring

sufferance—suffering

betimes—early

palter—quibble

cautelous—crafty

opinion—reputation

clock—there were no striking clocks in Rome in
Cæsar's time

fantasy—imagination

augurers—soothsayers

foils—nets

figures—imaginary forms

fantasies—products of the fancy

suburb—outskirts

Cato—great Roman philosopher and patriot

Act II

Scene 2

Story

On the morning of the Ides of March, Cæsar, disturbed by Calpurnia's dream of the night before, sends for the report of his Augurers. Calpurnia enters and commands her husband not to stir. Referring to the storm and to his wife's dream as of no consequence, Cæsar decides to go to the Senate. Then, Calpurnia entreats him to stay home and relates the omens seen during the night by the watch in the street. Casting these rumors aside as pertaining to every man as much as to himself, Cæsar again says that he shall go forth. But after an unfavorable report from the priests and another appeal from Calpurnia, Cæsar resolves to humor his wife and remain at home. Had not Decius Brutus entered at that moment,

Cæsar would not have gone to the Capitol. But Decius, hearing Calpurnia's dream, interprets it so favorably for Cæsar that the latter decides he will go. He then welcomes Publius, Brutus, Ligarius, Metellus, Casca, Trebonius and Cinna who have come to escort him to the Senate. Antony, his friend, comes later, and Cæsar never dreaming that he is surrounded by cut-throats, makes these villains seem more contemptible when he asks them as friends to taste some wine.

Analysis

Scene 2 is justly famous for its portraits of Cæsar, Calpurnia and Decius Brutus.

The Cæsar found in these lines is not the Cæsar of history whom Shakespeare paints in such glowing terms as "Great Julius," "The foremost man of all this world," "The mightiest Julius," "Conquering Cæsar and broad-minded Cæsar"! These phrases show that Shakespeare knew the real Cæsar and that he characterized him as superstitious, changeable, swaggering and credulous to make him appear something like the dwarf men who were bent on killing him. The best proof of his character is to be found in his own writings. In them, there is nothing to indicate that he had any religious belief at all. When he won a victory, he thanked his soldiers and no one else. Nor is there in them, self-worship or self-praise. In the seven books of his Commentaries he uses the first person but five times. That he was not easily duped is evident from his capacity for selecting men. He had in his army engineers, architects, mechanics, bridge-builders who were the fighters that added province after province to Rome.

Calpurnia, his wife, was a very ordinary woman. That

she was an admirable gossip follows from the fearful tale she tells Cæsar about the lioness, the graves, the dead, the fiery warriors, the blood drizzling on the Capitol, the noise of battle, the horses neighing, the groaning of dying men and the ghosts shrieking and squealing about the streets. She inspires no lofty sentiments, no respect, no deep regard for her gossip, from him, because there is no mental union between them.

In Decius Brutus, the scene portrays the most contemptible conspirator of them all. Knowing that he stands high in Cæsar's regard, he calls on the Dictator, professing the interest of a friend, flatters him and lures him to his death. History states that this eloquent traitor did not long enjoy the reward of his perfidy but that he was executed by Mark Antony one year after his base betrayal of Cæsar who had named him in his will.

Passages to be Memorized

CALPURNIA'S DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPEST ON THE NIGHT
BEFORE THE IDES OF MARCH

Calpurnia—Cæsar, I never stood on ceremonies,
Yet now they fright me. There is one within,
Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;
Fierce fiery warriors fight upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
Horses did neigh and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets.
O Cæsar! these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them.

CÆSAR'S IDEA OF DEATH

Cæsar—Cowards die many times before their death;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.

AN ANCIENT BELIEF

Calpurnia—When beggars die, there are no comets seen;
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of
princes.

Unusual Words and Phrases

night gown—a loose gown
ceremonies—signs or omens
right—regular
hurtled—encountered, clashed
letter'd—form
afeared—afraid
stays me—induces me to stay
tinctures—stains
cognizance—badge
stirr'd—stirring
yearns—grieves

Act II

Scene 3

Story

Artemidorus, a friend of Cæsar, having learned of the conspiracy, writes a warning to Cæsar which he hopes to place in Cæsar's hands as the latter journeys toward the Capitol.

Analysis

This scene does not advance the action; it is merely a digression. It serves to keep the reader in suspense as to whether Cæsar will escape or not and also to show that Cæsar had real friends who felt that he was the victim of envy.

Passage to be Memorized

My heart laments that virtue cannot live
Out of the teeth of emulation.

emulation—envy

Act II

Scene 4

Story

Portia having learned of the conspiracy from Brutus is almost beside herself with anxiety to hear if Brutus was successful. In her talk with Lucius and the sooth-sayer, her interest in her husband's undertaking almost consumes her. Then, praying for his success, she sends Lucius to Brutus for news of the enterprise and, growing faint with worry, enters her house.

Analysis

Portia's state of mind in this scene makes it evident that Brutus had told her about the conspiracy. Although the scene is another digression used to whet the interest, it also serves to give the idea of the feelings of an ardent spectator. In addition, it pictures Portia as worthy of Brutus' compliment, "You are my true and honorable wife."

Unusual Words and Phrases

constancy—self-control

press—crowd

sooth—in truth

praetors—judges

enterprise—the murder of Cæsar

Act III

Scene 1

Story

On his way to the Capitol, Cæsar is warned by Artemidorus and a soothsayer, but in vain. In the Senate-house, the conversation of Popilius Lena with Cæsar makes the conspirators feel that their plot is discovered but when Trebonius succeeds in drawing Antony away from Cæsar, they take heart again and proceed with their program. Metellus Cimber requests Cæsar to recall his brother, Publius Cimber, from exile. Cæsar refuses in anger. Then Brutus, Cassius, Cinna and Decius plead for the recall of Publius. Cæsar rejects their prayer. They then stab him and proclaim, "Peace, Freedom and Liberty." Next, Antony, from his hiding place, requests through his servant that the conspirators give him an interview and a safe return. They grant his request. He makes a temporary peace with them and gets possession of Cæsar's body and permission from them to deliver Cæsar's funeral oration. While he is alone with Cæsar's corpse, uttering curses upon the conspirators, a servant of Octavius announces the approach of Cæsar's nephew.

Analysis

Owing to the fact that the climax comes in it and that the conspirators are for the first time called upon to form

a platform and a plan of government, and that Antony now becomes the avenger of Cæsar, Scene 1 is absorbingly interesting. Shakespeare again shows his ability to keep his audience in suspense by giving them a glimmer of hope that Artemidorus, the soothsayer, or some one else will at last save Cæsar. As successors of Cæsar, Brutus and Cassius fail dismally. Their attempt to arouse the mob, whom they both despise, with the cry of liberty, gets a slight response and then falls flat. They prove conclusively that they cannot steer the ship of state. Antony, on the other hand, gives excellent promise. At first, he sends a servant (thus showing his distrust of the conspirators) to learn their attitude toward himself. Finding Brutus friendly, he meets the latter and Cassius and agrees to be friends on condition that they give him reasons for slaying Cæsar. Brutus promises to give him such assurances that, were Antony the son of Cæsar, he would be satisfied. That they will never be able to justify Cæsar's death, Antony shows as soon as he is alone with Cæsar's corpse. What he says foreshadows him as Cæsar's avenger.

Passages to be Memorized

CÆSAR DESPISES FAWNING

Cæsar— I must prevent thee, Cimber.
These couchings and these lowly courtesies
Might fire the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
Into the law of children. Be not fond,
To think that Cæsar bears such rebel blood
That will be thaw'd from the true quality
With that which melteth fools; I mean, sweet words,
Low-crooked court'sies and base spaniel-fawning.
Thy brother by decree is banished:
If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,

I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Cæsar doth not wrong, nor without cause
Will he be satisfied.

CONSTANCY

Cæsar—I could be well moved, if I were as you;
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me:
But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks;
They are all fire and every one doth shine;
But there's but one in all doth hold his place:
So in the world; 'tis furnish'd well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshaked of motion: and that I am he,
Let me a little show it, even in this;
That I was constant Cimber should be banish'd,
And constant do remain to keep him so.

BRUTUS APPEALS TO THE MOB

Brutus—Grant that, and then is death a benefit:
So are we Cæsar's friends, that have abridged
His time of fearing death. Stoop, Romans, stoop,
And let us bathe our hands in Cæsar's blood
Up to the elbows, and besmear our swords:
Then walk we forth, even to the market-place,
And waving our red weapons o'er our heads,
Let's all cry "Peace, freedom, and liberty!"

Passages to be Closely Studied

ANTONY'S SPEECH TO THE CONSPIRATORS

Antony—I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,
Who else must be let blood, who else is rank:
If I myself, there is no hour so fit
As Cæsar's death hour, nor no instrument

Of half that worth as those your swords, made rich
 With the most noble blood of all this world.
 I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,
 Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke,
 Fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years,
 I shall not find myself so apt to die:
 No place will please me so, no mean of death,
 As here by Cæsar, and by you cut off,
 The choice and master spirits of this age.

ANTONY MAKES A TRUCE WITH THE CONSPIRATORS

Antony— I doubt not of your wisdom.
 Let each man render me his bloody hand:
 First, Marcus Brutus, will I shake with you;
 Next, Caius Cassius, do I take your hand;
 Now, Decius Brutus, yours; now yours, Metellus;
 Yours, Cinna; and, my valiant Casca, yours;
 Though last, not least in love, yours, good Trebonius.
 Gentlemen all,—alas, what shall I say?
 My credit now stands on such slippery ground,
 That one of two bad ways you must conceit me,
 Either a coward or a flatterer.
 That I did love thee, Cæsar, O, 'tis true:
 If then thy spirit look upon us now,
 Shall it not grieve thee dearer than thy death
 To see thy Antony making his peace,
 Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes,
 Most noble! in the presence of thy corse?
 Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
 Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood.
 It would become me better than to close
 In terms of friendship with thine enemies.
 Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bay'd, brave
 hart;
 Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
 Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.
 O world, thou wast the forest to this hart;
 And this, indeed, O world, the heart of thee.
 How like a deer, stricken by many princes,
 Dost thou here lie!

ANTONY ADDRESSES CÆSAR'S CORPSE

Antony—O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
 That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
 Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
 That ever lived in the tide of times.
 Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
 Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,—
 Which like dumb mouths do ope their ruby lips
 To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue,—
 A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
 Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
 Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
 Blood and destruction shall be so in use
 And dreadful objects so familiar
 That mothers shall but smile when they behold
 Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;
 All pity choked with custom of fell deeds:
 And Cæsar's spirit ranging for revenge,
 With Ate by his side come hot from hell,
 Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
 Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war;
 That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
 With carrion men, groaning for burial.

Unusual Words and Phrases

constant—always the same

puissant—powerful

couchings—cringings

pre-ordinance—what has been decided upon

repealing—recalling

freedom of repeal—the right to return from banishment

apprehensive—intelligent

unshaked of motion—unmoved by whim or caprice

bootless—without success

common pulpits—platforms from which addresses were made

voice—vote

conceit me—think me

picked—marked

bay'd—surrounded

modesty—moderation

ranging—roaming like a wild beast for prey

Ate—goddess of discord and harm

As dogs of war—sword, fire, famine and disease

The Carrion men—dead men whose bodies are unburied

passion—sorrow

Act III
Marcus

Scene 2

Story

With great confidence, Brutus speaks to the mob, giving his reasons for killing Cæsar, and seems to have won their good will, but, notwithstanding, Antony, speaking after him, defends Cæsar so eloquent all, that Antony, speaking after him, defends and rage. Brutus now so that he rouses the people to mutiny the enraged people of two and Cassius flee from the frenzy of a love. Octavius comes to Rome.

Analysis

Scene 2 is probably the greatest scene in the play. It records the cold, balanced utterances of Brutus to win the mob through his Antony's success in rousing them to frenzy and madness against the conspirators. Brutus talks over the heads of his hearers about such abstract things as love, fortune, power, ambition, patriotism and baseness. Antony, on the other hand, divides his speech into six human topics as follows:

1. He appeals to their love of money by telling them that Cæsar brought many captives home to Rome whose ransoms filled the general coffers.

2. He shows them that Cæsar had pity for them by declaring that when the poor had cried Cæsar had wept.

3. He proves to them that Cæsar was not ambitious by telling them that he had offered Cæsar a crown three times which Cæsar did thrice refuse.

4. He arouses their curiosity by telling them that Cæsar left a will in which they would be very much interested.

5. He stirs them to fury by first showing them Cæsar's blood-soaked mantle and then his body cut, torn and hacked by the traitors.

6. He appeals to their gratitude by reading Cæsar's will and by pointing out how dearly Cæsar loved them. He rouses them to such a pitch of madness that the conspirators fled like convicts.

Passages to be Memorized

BRUTUS TRIES TO WIN THE FAVOR OF THE MOB

Brutus—Be patient till the last.

Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear; believe me for mine honor, and have respect to mine honor, that you may believe: censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Cæsar's, to him I say, that Brutus' love to Cæsar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Cæsar, this is my answer:—Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Cæsar were living and die all slaves, than that Cæsar were dead, to live all free men? As Cæsar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honor him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honor for his valor; and death for his ambition. Who is

here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

ANTONY'S FUNERAL ORATION

Antony—Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;

I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them;

The good is oft interred with their bones;

So let it be with Cæsar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious;

If it were so, it was a grievous fault,

And grievously hath Cæsar answer'd it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest,—

For Brutus is an honorable man;

So are they all, all honorable men—

Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me:

But Brutus says he was ambitious;

And Brutus is an honorable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,

Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:

Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious?

When that the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept:

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And Brutus is an honorable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal

I thrice presented him a kingly crown,

Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;

And, sure, he is an honorable man.

I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,

But here I am to speak what I do know.

You all did love him once, not without cause:

What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?

O Judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason! Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.

* * *

Antony—But yesterday the word of Cæsar might
Have stood against the world: now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.
O masters, if I were disposed to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honorable men: /
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,
Than I will wrong such honorable men.
But here's a parchment with the seal of Cæsar;
I found it in his closet; 'tis his will:
Let but the commons hear this testament—
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read—
And they would go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood,
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it as a rich legacy
Unto their issue.

All—The will, the will! we will hear Cæsar's will.

Antony—Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it;
It is not meet you know how Cæsar loved you.
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;
And, being men, hearing the will of Cæsar,
It will inflame you, it will make you mad:
'T is good you know not that you are his heirs;
For, if you should, O, what would come of it!

* * *

Antony—If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
You all do know this mantle: I remember
The first time ever Cæsar put it on;
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,
That day he overcame the Nervii:
Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through:

See what a rent the envious Casca made:
 Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd;
 And as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,
 Mark how the blood of Cæsar follow'd it,
 As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
 If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no:
 For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel:
 Judge, O you gods, how dearly Cæsar loved him!
 This was the most unkindest cut of all;
 For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,
 Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
 Quite overcame him: then burst his mighty heart;
 And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
 Even at the base of Pompey's statua,
 Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.
 O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
 Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
 Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.
 O, now you weep, and I perceive you feel
 The dint of pity: these are gracious drops.
 Kind souls, what weep you when you but behold
 Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? Look you here,
 Here is himself, marr'd, as you see, with traitors.

* * *

Antony—Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir
 you up
 To such a sudden flood of mutiny.
 They that have done this deed are honorable;
 What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,
 That made them do it: they are wise and honorable,
 And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
 I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:
 I am no orator, as Brutus is;
 But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
 That love my friend; and that they know full well
 That gave me public leave to speak of him:
 For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
 Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
 To stir men's blood: I only speak right on;
 I tell you that which you yourselves do know;

Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor, poor, dumb mouths,

And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Cæsar, that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

All—We'll mutiny.

First Cit.—We'll burn the house of Brutus.

Third Cit.—Away, then! come, seek the conspirators.

Antony—Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me speak.

All—Peace, ho! Hear Antony. Most noble Antony!

Antony—Why, friends, you go to do you know not what:
Wherein hath Cæsar thus deserved your loves?

Alas, you know not: I must tell you, then:

You have forgot the will I told you of.

All—Most true. The will! Let's stay and hear the will.

Antony—Here is the will, and under Cæsar's seal.

To every Roman citizen he gives,

To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.

Second Cit.—Most noble Cæsar! We'll revenge his death.

Third Cit.—O royal Cæsar!

Antony—Hear me with patience.

All—Peace, ho!

Antony—Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,

His private arbours and new-planted orchards,

On this side Tiber; he hath left them you,

And to your heirs for ever, common pleasures,

To walk abroad, and recreate yourselves.

Here was a Cæsar! when comes such another?

First Cit.—Never, never. Come, away, away!

We'll burn his body in the holy place,

And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.

Take up the body.

Second Cit.—Go fetch fire.

Third Cit.—Pluck down benches.

Fourth Cit.—Pluck down forms, windows, anything.

[*Exeunt Citizens with the body.*]

Antony—Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot,

Take thou what course thou wilt!

*Unusual Words and Phrases**rendered*—given*lovers*—friends*censure*—form your opinion of me*enrolled*—registered*extenuated*—lessened*enforced*—urged*beholding*—indebted*answered it*—punished for it*honorable*—meant for sarcasm*napkins*—handkerchiefs*Nervii*—a battle in which nearly 60,000 Gauls were
killed*furious*—malicious*flourished*—triumphed*marred*—cut, torn*æit*—understanding*the drachma*—about \$1.33 of our money*forms*—long seats or benches*belike*—probably

Act III

Scene 3

Story

The mob in their fury met Cinna, the poet, and mistaking him for the conspirator with the same name fell upon him and slew him outright in the market-place.

Analysis

Scene 3 is a digression and adds nothing to the action of the play. It does, however, show that Shakespeare loathed the rabble, that in the last scene where it

appears in the play, he made it brainless and bloodthirsty, and that it was by Antony turned into a human volcano.

Unusual Words and Phrases

forth of doors—out of doors

you were best—it were best for you

turn him going—let him go without injury

Act IV

Scene 1

Story

Imitating the action of Pompey, Crassus and Cæsar, who divided the world among themselves, Lepidus, Octavius and Antony form a treaty by which each is to have one-third of the Roman Empire. They also make up a list of the men whom each wants put to death.

Analysis

This scene has little value in promoting the action except that it reveals a plan to fight the conspirators. The proscriptions and the forty lines on Lepidus are discursive and not in Shakespeare's best vein. In giving up his nephew for slaughter and in openly attempting to change Cæsar's will, Antony shows how callous and selfish he is. Lepidus also, although he speaks but four lines, does not loom large as a successor of Cæsar, and when he coolly surrenders his brother to be murdered, the reader is glad that Antony's messenger boy disappears. Even Octavius is not much better than the other two, but when he allows Cicero, who is worth more than all the conspirators and triumvirs put together, to be sacrificed, the reader at once concludes he is not a second Julius Cæsar.

Passages to be Studied

LEPIDUS, THE MESSENGER BOY OF ANTONY

Antony—But, Lepidus, go you to Cæsar's house;
Fetch the will hither, and we shall determine
How to cut off some charge in legacies.

ANTONY'S CONTEMPT FOR LEPIDUS

Antony—This is a slight unmeritable man,
Meet to be sent on errands: is it fit,
The three-fold world divided, he should stand
One of the three to share it?

ANTONY'S DESCRIPTION OF LEPIDUS

Antony—So is my horse, Octavius; and for that
I do appoint him store of provender:
It is a creature that I teach to fight,
To wind, to stop, to run directly on,
His corporal motion govern'd by my spirit.
And, in some taste, is Lepidus but so;
He must be taught and train'd and bid go forth;
A barren-spirited fellow; one that feeds
On objects, arts and imitations,
Which, out of use and staled by other men,
Begin his fashion: do not talk of him,
But as a property.

Unusual Words and Phrases

charge—expense

voice—vote

proscription—the act of condemning to death without trial

appoint—assign

provender—provision

barren-spirited—dull, heavy

staled—made ordinary

go sit in council—consult

surest answered—the best way to meet
bay'd about—worried by some force

Act IV

Scene 2

Story

The camp of Brutus and Cassius near Sardis now becomes the center of action. Cassius comes up with his army before Brutus' tent and accuses Brutus of doing him wrong. Brutus requests Cassius not to wrangle before the soldiers and invites him into his tent.

Analysis

The wrangle between Brutus and Cassius foreshadows disaster and is a prelude to the quarrel in the next scene.

Passages to be Studied

BRUTUS DESPISES CEREMONY

Brutus— Thou hast described
A hot friend cooling: ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to sicken and decay,
It useth an enforced ceremony.
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith;
But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,
Make gallant show and promise of their mettle;
But when they should endure the bloody spur
They fall their crests, and, like deceitful jades,
Sink in the trial. Comes his army on?

BRUTUS ACTS LIKE A COOL PHILOSOPHER

Brutus— Cassius, be content;
Speak your griefs softly: I do know you well.
Before the eyes of both our armies here,
Which should perceive nothing but love from us,

Let us not wrangle: bid them move away;
 Then in my tent, Cassius, enlarge your griefs,
 And I will give you audience.

Unusual Words and Phrases

enforced ceremony—pomp, formality

hollow—empty

jades—worthless horses

Act IV

Scene 3

Story

Inside the tent of Brutus, the quarrel waxes warm—so warm, in fact, that Cassius threatens Brutus. Later, he weepingly offers to let Brutus kill him. At last, Brutus relents, forgives him and they make up over a bowl of wine. Brutus then tells Cassius the sad news of Portia's death. Next, Cassius advises against attacking the enemy and suggests that they let their foes attack them. Brutus overrules him and decides to march the next morning against Antony and Octavius. Cassius retires to his tent. Brutus seeks relaxation in music and reading. While he is deep in a book, Cæsar's ghost appears and tells him that he is his evil spirit and that Brutus shall see him at Philippi.

Analysis

Scene 3 is justly celebrated for its characterization. Cassius describes himself as a defender of bribe takers; Brutus scorns the idea of having an itching palm. Cassius denies that he has a fondness for gold; Brutus regards himself as a schoolmaster ready to chasten his erring brother-in-law. Cassius gasps at Brutus' speech;

the latter coolly tells him that Cæsar was murdered for supporting robbers. Cassius is dumbfounded; Brutus calls him a staring madman; Cassius threatens his tormentor; Brutus replies that he wears the armor of honesty. Cassius tells how one's friend should act; Brutus retorts that he does not like friends with so many faults. Cassius, after naming all his griefs, offers Brutus his life; Brutus explains his disposition. Cassius objects to being laughed at when he is vexed and ill-tempered; Brutus admits he was to blame for nagging his friend. Cassius offers peace; Brutus gracefully accepts.

The scene also shows Brutus as the foil of Cassius. Cassius wishes to let Antony and Octavius seek them and then wear them out, but Brutus as usual dominates and decides to march at once against his enemies and so brings on ruin.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

THE GRAFTER

Cassius—That you have wrong'd me doth appear in this:
You have condemn'd and noted Lucius Pella
For taking bribes here of the Sardians;
Wherein my letters, praying on his side,
Because I knew the man, were slighted off.

WHAT THREE MEN ARE DESCRIBED IN THE FOLLOWING
SELECTION?

Brutus—Remember March, the Ides of March remember:
Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake?
What villain touch'd his body, that did stab,
And not for justice? What, shall one of us,
That struck the foremost man of all this world
But for supporting robbers, shall we now
Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
And sell the mighty space of our large honors
For so much trash as may be grasped thus?

I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
Than such a Roman.

THE MADMAN

Brutus— Hear me, for I will speak.
Must I give way and room to your rash choler?
Shall I be frightened when a madman stares?

THE FRETFUL MAN

Cassius—O ye gods, ye gods! must I endure all this?
Brutus—All this! ay, more: fret till your proud heart
break!
Go show your slaves how choleric you are,
And make your bondmen tremble. Must I budge?
Must I observe you? must I stand and crouch
Under your testy humor? By the gods,
You shall digest the venom of your spleen,
Though it do split you; for, from this day forth,
I'll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter,
When you are waspish.

THE ACTOR

Cassius—Do not presume too much upon my love;
I may do that I shall be sorry for.

AN HONEST MAN

Brutus—You have done that you should be sorry for.
There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats;
For I am arm'd so strong in honesty,
That they pass by me as the idle wind
Which I respect not. I did send to you
For certain sums of gold, which you denied me:
For I can raise no money by vile means:
By heaven, I had rather coin my heart,
And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash
By any indirection. I did send
To you for gold to pay my legions,
Which you denied me: was that done like Cassius?

Should I have answer'd Caius Cassius so?
 When Marcus Brutus grows so covetous,
 To lock such rascal counters from his friends,
 Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts;
 Dash him to pieces!

THE DUTY OF A FRIEND

Cassius— Brutus hath rived my heart:
 A friend should bear his friend's infirmities,
 But Brutus makes mine greater than they are.

THE WOES OF CASSIUS

Cassius—Come, Antony, and young Octavius, come,
 Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,
 For Cassius is aweary of the world:
 Hated by one he loves; braved by his brother;
 Check'd like a bondman; all his faults observed,
 Set in a note-book, learn'd, and conn'd by rote,
 To cast into my teeth. O, I could weep
 My spirit from mine eyes! There is my dagger,
 And here my naked breast; within, a heart
 Dearer than Plutus' mine, richer than gold:
 If that thou be'st a Roman, take it forth;
 I, that denied thee gold, will give my heart:
 Strike, as thou didst at Cæsar; for, I know,
 When thou didst hate him worst, thou lovedst him
 better
 Than ever thou lovedst Cassius.

BRUTUS, A LAMB-LIKE MAN

Brutus— Sheathe your dagger:
 Be angry when you will, it shall have scope;
 Do what you will, dishonor shall be humor.
 O Cassius, you are yoked with a lamb
 That carries anger as the flint bears fire;
 Who, much-enforced, shows a hasty spark,
 And straight is cold again.

Brutus—When I spoke that, I was ill-temper'd too.

Cassius—Have not you love enough to bear with me,
When that rash humor which my mother gave me
Makes me forgetful?

Brutus— Yes, Cassius; and, from henceforth,
When you are over-earnest with your Brutus,
He'll think your mother chides, and leave you so.

Cassius—I did not think you could have been so angry.

Brutus—O Cassius, I am sick of many griefs.

Cassius—Of your philosophy you make no use,
If you give place to accidental evils.

Brutus—No man bears sorrow better. Portia is dead.

Cassius—Ha! Portia!

Brutus—She is dead.

Cassius—How 'scaped I killing when I cross'd you so?
O insupportable and touching loss!
Upon what sickness?

Brutus—Why, farewell, Portia. We must die, Messala:
With meditating that she must die once,
I have the patience to endure it now.

Cassius— This it is:
'Tis better that the enemy seek us:
So shall he waste his means, weary his soldiers,
Doing himself offence; whilst we lying still
Are full of rest, defence, and nimbleness.

BRUTUS' PLAN

Brutus—Good reasons must of force give place to better.
The people 'twixt Philippi and this ground
Do stand but in a forced affection,
For they have grudged us contribution:
The enemy, marching along by them,
By them shall make a fuller number up,
Come on refresh'd, new-added and encouraged;
From which advantage shall we cut him off,
If at Philippi we do face him there,
These people at our back.

BRUTUS OVERRULES CASSIUS AND MARCHES TO PHILIPPI

Brutus—Under your pardon. You must note beside
That we have tried the utmost of our friends,
Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe:
The enemy increaseth every day;
We, at the height, are ready to decline.
There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

THE KIND MASTER

Brutus—Bear with me, good boy, I am much forgetful,
Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

THE LOVER OF MUSIC AND BOOKS

Brutus—It was well done; and thou shalt sleep again;
I will not hold thee long: if I do live,
I will be good to thee. [*Music, and a song.*]
This is a sleepy tune. O murderous slumber,
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music? Gentle knave, good night;
I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee:

If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument ;
 I'll take it from thee ; and, good boy, good night.
 Let me see, let me see ; is not the leaf turn'd down
 Where I left reading ? Here it is, I think.

THE SUPERSTITIOUS BRUTUS

How ill this taper burns ! Ha ! who comes here ?
 I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
 That shapes this monstrous apparition.
 It comes upon me. Art thou anything ?
 Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,
 That makest my blood cold and my hair to stare ?
 Speak to me what thou art.

Ghost—Thy evil spirit, Brutus.

Brutus—Why comest thou ?

Ghost—To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.

Brutus—Well ; then I shall see thee again ?

Ghost—Ay, at Philippi.

Unusual Words and Phrases

noted—regarded with suspicion

slighted—paid no attention to

nice—insignificant, small

mart—trade

bay—growl at

to hedge me in—to try to direct me

tempt—provoke

choler—anger

indirection—underhanded means

braved—browbeaten

Plutus—the god of riches

counters—pieces of metal used in trade as money

enforced—aroused

straight—instantly

companion—fellow, a term of contempt

give place—give way

Philippi—a city in Northern Greece

omitted—neglected

o'er-watched—worn out with watching

mace—scepter

betimes—early

Act V

Scene 1

Story

Three pages of petty dialogue, used to tell the audience there is going to be a battle, open this scene. Next Cassius discusses the omens of the eagles with Messala and when Brutus comes up, converses on suicide. Then, after bidding each other an affectionate farewell, they prepare for battle.

Analysis

This scene is interesting on account of the new light it throws on the characters of Brutus and Cassius. Brutus' emotional parting with Cassius, foreshadowing, as it does, the last time they will ever meet on earth, moves the reader even now, and gives him as fine a picture of the choice between disgrace and death as there is in any language. Moreover, such a flood of pity rushes through the mind when reading these touching lines that one can never forget the master hand that wrote them.

Passages to be Studied

LOOKING BACKWARD

Cassius—Flatterers! Now, Brutus, thank yourself:
This tongue had not offended so to-day,
If Cassius might have ruled.

A PICTURE OF TRAITORS

Antony—Villains, you did not so, when your vile daggers
Hack'd one another in the sides of Cæsar:
You show'd your teeth like apes, and fawn'd like
hounds,
And bow'd like bondmen, kissing Cæsar's feet;
Whilst damned Casca, like a cur, behind
Struck Cæsar on the neck. O you flatterers!

CASSIUS CHANGES HIS PHILOSOPHY

Cassius—Messala,
This is my birthday; as this very day
Was Cassius born. Give me thy hand, Messala:
Be thou my witness that against my will,
As Pompey was, am I compell'd to set
Upon one battle all our liberties.
You know that I held Epicurus strong
And his opinion: now I change my mind,
And partly credit things that do presage.
Coming from Sardis, on our former ensign
Two mighty eagles fell, and there they perch'd,
Gorging and feeding from our soldiers' hands
Who to Philippi here consorted us:
This morning are they fled away and gone;
And in their steads do ravens, crows and kites,
Fly o'er our heads and downward look on us,
As we were sickly prey: their shadows seem
A canopy most fatal, under which
Our army lies, ready to give up the ghost.

BRUTUS BIDS CASSIUS FAREWELL

Brutus—No, Cassius, no: think not, thou noble Roman,
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;
He bears too great a mind. But this same day
Must end that work the Ides of March begun;
And whether we shall meet again I know not.
Therefore our everlasting farewell take:
For ever, and for ever, farewell, Cassius!
If we do meet again, why, we shall smile;
If not, why then, this parting was well made.

*Unusual Words and Phrases**sign of battle*—a scarlet coat*exigent*—exigency*make forth*—go forth*posture*—location*Hybla*—a town in Sicily famous for its honey*peevish*—irritable*stomachs*—appetites*I held Epicurus*—Epicurus held that being influenced by omens was foolish*Sardis*—one time Capital of Lydia*consorted*—attended*Cato*—a famous Roman who took his own life at Utica in Africa. He is often called Uticensio to prevent confusion with Cato, the Censor

Act V

Scene 2

Story

Brutus charges Octavius and sends Messala to Cassius with instructions to attack at once.

*Unusual Words and Phrases**bills*—instructions*set on*—attack*side*—wing

Act V

Scene 3

Story

Antony's legions defeat those of Cassius. Cassius retreating to a hill, sends Titinius to learn whether troops in the distance are friend or enemy. Titinius rides on

and meets Brutus' friendly troops. Cassius, thinking that Titinius is captured, gets his slave to stab him. Returning with good news and finding Cassius dead, Titinius also takes his own life. On learning the fate of these men, Brutus sadly calls them the last of all the Romans.

Analysis

The scene represents Cassius as a kind master. After giving Pindarus, his slave, freedom, Cassius compels the servant to stab him; and when Cassius is dead Pindarus pays him such a glowing tribute as:

So, I am free, yet would not so have been
Durst I have done my will.

Passages to be Studied as Examples of Characterization

THE LAST MOMENTS OF CASSIUS

Cassius—Come down; behold no more.

O, coward that I am, to live so long,
To see my best friend ta'en before my face!

PINDARUS descends

Come hither, sirrah:

In Parthia did I take thee prisoner;

And then I swore thee, saving of thy life,

That whatsoever I did bid thee do,

Thou shouldst attempt it. Come now, keep thine
oath;

Now be a freeman; and with this good sword,
That ran through Cæsar's bowels, search this bosom.

Stand not to answer: here, take thou the hilts;

And when my face is cover'd, as 'tis now,

Guide thou the sword. [*Pindarus stabs him.*] Cæsar,
thou art revenged,

Even with the sword that kill'd thee.

[*Dies.*

GENUINE FRIENDSHIP

Titinius— Hie you, Messala,
And I will seek for Pindarus the while.
[*Exit Messala.*
Why didst thou send me forth, brave Cassius?
Did I not meet thy friends? and did not they
Put on my brows this wreath of victory,
And bid me give it thee? Didst thou not hear their
shouts?
Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything!
But, hold thee, take this garland on thy brow;
Thy Brutus bid me give it thee, and I
Will do his bidding. Brutus, come apace,
And see how I regarded Caius Cassius.
By your leave, gods: this is a Roman's part:
Come, Cassius' sword, and find Titinius' heart.
[*Kills himself.*

ERROR IS THE CHILD OF MELANCHOLY

Messala—Mistrust of good success hath done this deed.
O hateful error, melancholy's child,
Why dost thou show to the apt thoughts of men
The things that are not? O error, soon conceived,
Thou never comest unto a happy birth,
But kill'st the mother that engender'd thee!

BRUTUS' TRIBUTE TO CASSIUS

Brutus—Are yet two Romans living such as these?
The last of all the Romans, fare thee well!
It is impossible that ever Rome
Should breed thy fellow. Friends, I owe more tears
To this dead man than you shall see me pay.
I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time.

THE MIGHTY CÆSAR

Brutus—O Julius Cæsar, thou art mighty yet!
Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords
In our own proper entrails.

Unusual Words and Phrases

ensign—standard bearer

regard—watch

swore thee—made thee swear

freeman—a captive in war became free on the death
of his master

search—pierce

mistrust—doubt

Thassos—an island south of Macedonia

Parthia—what is now Persia

Act V

Scene 4

Story

In this scene, young Cato, after making a boastful speech about his descent, dies fighting. Brutus also makes a panicky speech before he attacks the enemy. Lucilius tries to save Brutus by assuming his name and is captured. Antony orders his soldiers to treat Lucilius with all kindness.

Analysis

The purpose of the scene is to keep the reader in suspense in regard to the end of Brutus.

Passage to be Memorized

A MAGNANIMOUS ANTONY

Antony—This is not Brutus, friend ; but, I assure you,
A prize no less in worth : keep this man safe ;
Give him all kindness : I had rather have
Such men my friends than enemies. Go on,
And see whether Brutus be alive or dead ;
And bring us word unto Octavius' tent
How everything is chanced.

Act V

Scene 5

Story

Brutus, filled with grief after the successive refusals of his friends Clitus, Dardanius and Volumnius to kill him, gets Strato to hold the sword with which he killed Cæsar, while he runs upon it. When Antony and Octavius find his body, they give it an honorable burial.

Analysis

The scene is memorable for its great picture of Brutus as he approaches death. Without remorse, he rejoices that all his friends were true to him. Looking forward, he sees himself the hero, the patriot, the martyr to all lovers of liberty in ages yet unborn and rounds out his life history with this simple prayer and noble confession:

Cæsar, now be still,
I kill'd not thee with half so good a will.

Passage to be Memorized

A MAN

Antony—This was the noblest Roman of them all:
All the conspirators, save only he,
Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar;
He only, in a general honest thought
And common good to all, made one of them.
His life was gentle, and the elements
So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

MACBETH ANALYZED

PERSONS REPRESENTED

DUNCAN, king of Scotland
 MALCOLM, } his sons
 DONALBAIN, }
 MACBETH, } generals of the King's army
 BANQUO, }
 MACDUFF, }
 LENNOX, }
 ROSS, } noblemen of Scotland
 MENTEITH, }
 ANGUS, }
 CAITHNESS, }
 FLEANCE, son to Banquo
 SIWARD, earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces
 Young SIWARD, his son
 SEYTON, an officer attending on Macbeth
 Boy, son to Macduff
 An English Doctor
 A Scotch Doctor
 A Sergeant
 A Porter
 An Old Man

 Lady MACBETH
 Lady MACDUFF
 Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth

 HECATE
 Three Witches
 Apparitions

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers,
 Attendants, and Messengers

SCENE: Scotland; England

MACBETH ANALYZED

Act I

Scene 1

Story

Three witches in a desert place during a storm arrange to meet Macbeth.

Analysis

This scene, which contains only twelve lines, suggests the atmosphere of guilt and evil in which the whole play is steeped. In addition, it introduces Macbeth's name and at once arouses the curiosity of the reader. Who is he? What is he? Why should such hags wish to meet him? Where is he? Lines 11 and 12 serve as a warning that the existing state of affairs is to be upset and hint that no good can be expected from these creatures.

Dialogue to be Studied for Characterization and Atmosphere

First Witch—When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Sec. Witch—When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch—That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch—Where the place?

Sec. Witch— Upon the heath.

Third Witch—There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch—I come, Graymalkin.

All—Paddock calls:—Anon!

Fair is foul, and foul is fair
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Unusual Words and Phrases

hurlyburly—uproar

heath—a moor-land

Graymalkin—a gray cat

Paddock—a toad

anon—straightway, soon

Fair is foul, and foul is fair—what others think fair
we think foul, and what we call fair others call
foul

Act 1

Scene 2

Story

Duncan, King of Scotland, learns that the rebellion led by Macdonwald, aided by the Norwegian king, has been crushed by the loyal army under Macbeth and Banquo. On hearing of the treason of the Thane of Cawdor, Duncan condemns him to death and confers his title on Macbeth as a reward for his victory.

Analysis

The description of Macbeth as “brave,” “valiant,” and “worthy,” increases the interest in him and makes him the man of the hour. His character as a brave soldier is drawn in sharp contrast to that of the king, who, with his two sons, is safe in camp, far from danger. Compared with Macbeth, the meek Duncan and his sons appear to be of little importance. The scene has covered Macbeth with so much glory that his appearance is eagerly looked for by his awakened admirers who through the speeches of witches, the bloody sergeant, Ross and Duncan expect to see a real hero. Another important purpose of the scene is to

reward Macbeth with the title of Cawdor. This has a tremendous influence on Macbeth's future action.

MACBETH'S BRAVERY RELATED BY THE SERGEANT

Sergeant— But all's too weak:
For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to
him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

Duncan—O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

Sergeant—As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valor arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.

Duncan—Dismay'd not this

Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

Sergeant— Yes;

As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks; so they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe.
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorizing another Golgotha,
I cannot tell—
But I am faint; my gashes cry for help.

ROSS PRAISES MACBETH'S STIRRING DEEDS TO THE KING

Ross— God save the king!

Duncan—Whence camest thou, worthy thane?

Ross— From Fife, great king;
 Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
 And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
 With terrible numbers,
 Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
 The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;
 Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,
 Confronted him with self-comparisons,
 Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
 Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,
 The victory fell on us.

DUNCAN HONORS MACBETH

Duncan—No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
 Our bosom interest. Go pronounce his present death,
 And with his former title greet Macbeth.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Choke their art—prevent swimming
kerns—light-armed soldiers
gallowglasses—heavy-armed soldiers
minion—favorite
Norweyan Lord—King of Norway
furbished—polished
cracks—charges
Golgotha—a place of burial
flout—mock, insult
Thane—a title equal to Earl
Bellona's bridegroom—Macbeth, Bellona was the
 goddess of war
self-comparisons—as good as he gave
composition—settlement
deign—allow
disbursed—paid
dollar—name of a coin (not the U. S. dollar)

Act I

Scene 3

Story

Macbeth, returning from battle, with Banquo, comes upon the three witches, who greet him as "Thane of Glamis," "Thane of Cawdor," and "Macbeth that shalt be King hereafter." Then, addressing Banquo, they tell him that he is lesser than Macbeth, and greater; that he is not so happy, yet much happier; that he shall get Kings, though not be one himself. The witches vanish and the King's messengers, Ross and Angus, approach and tell Macbeth that Duncan has made him Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth is deeply moved and, as it confirms the statement of the witches, he construes it as proof that their prediction that he will be King will come true. Banquo warns him not to be misled by the witches into seeking the crown.

Analysis

The student who wishes to understand the tragedy of Macbeth must study thoroughly the messages of the witches, to both Macbeth and Banquo, as nearly all the action which follows depends upon these prophecies. They arouse Macbeth's sleeping ambitions. He starts violently when he hears that he will be King. The prospect of wearing the crown is always before him, and finally lures him, in spite of Banquo's warning, into killing Duncan. Even when crowned King he continues to be haunted by the prophecies of the weird sisters. He remembers their remarks to Banquo, and a horrible fear grips him. Fear is the motive which causes him to plot against Banquo and his son, Fleance.

Fear of Banquo, fear of Macduff, and fear of the people, at last bring about his ruin.

Passage to be Memorized

Macbeth— Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen,—
This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good: if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth I am Thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man, that function
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

The witches have made two statements which are true. Being true, they serve as happy introductions to the prediction: that I shall be King hereafter. (I thank you, Ross and Angus, for bringing me such gratifying news from the King.) This temptation of fate cannot be bad; yet it cannot be beneficial. If it be bad, why has it given me an evidence of success? I am Thane of Cawdor, as the second witch said. If it be to my advantage, why do I stop to consider putting Duncan out of my way? The very thought of taking his life makes my hair stand on end and makes my heart beat wildly. I can face present dangers with less fear than I can bear to think of facing a man whom I contemplate killing in the future. So far, though

I am only dreaming whether I shall end Duncan's life, pondering over it confuses my mind to such an extent that I am unable to reason. The kingdom of my mind has become so upset that nothing seems real to me except the unreal.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

BANQUO DESCRIBES THE WITCHES

Banquo—How far is't called to Forres? What are these
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand
me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

THE WITCHES GREET MACBETH

Macbeth—Speak, if you can. What are you?
First Witch—All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of
Glamis!
Sec. Witch—All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of
Cawdor!
Third Witch—All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king here-
after!

THE PROPHECIES MAKE BANQUO CURIOUS TO KNOW WHY
MACBETH STARTS IN FEAR AT THE MENTION OF THE
CROWN AND THEY ALSO MAKE HIM ANXIOUS
ABOUT HIS OWN FATE

Banquo—Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of
truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner

You greet with present grace and great prediction
 Of noble having and of royal hope,
 That he seems rapt withal; to me you speak not.
 If you can look into the seeds of time,
 And say which grain will grow and which will not,
 Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
 Your favors nor your hate.

THESE HARMLESS FORECASTS FORESHADOW THE SUBJECT
 OF THE THIRD ACT AND THE DEATH OF BANQUO

First Witch—Hail!

Sec. Witch—Hail!

Third Witch—Hail!

First Witch—Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Sec. Witch—Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch—Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

First Witch—Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

NOTE THE EAGERNESS OF MACBETH AND THE INDIFFERENCE
 OF BANQUO

Macbeth—Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;

But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,

A prosperous gentleman; and to be king

Stands not within the prospect of belief,

No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence

You owe this strange intelligence? or why

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way

With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

[*Witches vanish.*]

ROSS AND ANGUS VERIFY THE WITCHES' PREDICTIONS

Ross—The king hath happily received, Macbeth,

The news of thy success; and when he reads

Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,

His wonders and his praises do contend

Which should be thine or his: silenced with that,

In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,

He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
 Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
 Strange images of death. As thick as hail
 Came post with post; and every one did bear
 Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
 And pour'd them down before him.

Angus— We are sent
 To give thee from our royal master thanks;
 Only to herald thee into his sight,
 Not pay thee.

Ross—And, for an earnest of a greater honor,
 He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor:
 In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
 For it is thine.

Banquo— What, can the devil speak true?

Macbeth—The thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress
 me
 In borrow'd robes?

Angus— Who was the thane lives yet;
 But under heavy judgment bears that life
 Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was com-
 bined
 With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
 With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
 He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not;
 But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,
 Have overthrown him.

MACBETH BECOMES AMBITIOUS

Macbeth—[*Aside*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
 The greatest is behind.

THE HONEST BANQUO DOES NOT SUSPECT THE GUILTY THOUGHTS IN MACBETH'S MIND

Macbeth—[*To Ross and Angus*] Thanks for your pains.
 [*To Banquo*] Do you not hope your children shall
 be kings,
 When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
 Promised no less to them?

Banquo— That, trusted home,
 Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
 Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange:
 And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
 The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
 Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
 In deepest consequence.

THE INNOCENT BANQUO EXPLAINS MACBETH'S RAPT
 CONDUCT AS THE EFFECT OF NEW HONORS

Banquo— Look, how our partner's rapt.
Macbeth—[*Aside*] If chance will have me king, why,
 chance may crown me,
 Without my stir.
Banquo— New honors come upon him,
 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
 But with the aid of use.

Unusual Words and Phrases

aroint—be gone
rump-fed—fed on scraps
ronyon—mangy creature
card—guide for seamen
penthouse-lid—a shed sloping down from the main
 building
posters—messengers, swift travelers
corporal—body, matter
earnest—pledge, evidence
enkindle—rouse
prologues—introductions
imperial—relating to empire
supernatural—beyond nature's laws
fantastical—imaginary
single state—weak being

Act I

Scene 4

Story

Malcolm reports to Duncan that the former Thane of Cawdor has been executed. The King thanks Macbeth and Banquo for their work, and bestows upon his eldest son, Malcolm, the title of Prince of Cumberland and makes him heir to the throne. He then announces his intention to visit Macbeth's castle at Inverness. Macbeth says that he will go ahead and inform his wife of the King's coming.

Analysis

“There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face;
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.”

Duncan exclaims, and then gratefully greets Macbeth who is already at heart a blacker traitor than the executed Cawdor. The King, not suspecting Macbeth's evil designs, honors him highly and receives his false assurance of service and loyalty. When Duncan designates his son, Malcolm, as his successor, to be known as the Prince of Cumberland, Macbeth immediately realizes that he will also have to murder Malcolm in order to attain his ambition of becoming King. When Duncan tells him he wishes to lay himself under further obligations to him by becoming his guest at Inverness, Macbeth hurries away, ostensibly to tell his wife the good news. His real purpose, however, is to secure her help in plotting against the King—the sovereign who has honored him with such praise as “peer-

less kinsman," "worthiest cousin," "noble Macbeth," and who has made him Thane of Cawdor.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE DEATH OF CAWDOR

Malcolm—

But I have spoke

With one that saw him die, who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it. He died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed
As 't were a careless trifle.

MACBETH'S FIRST OPEN DECLARATION AGAINST DUNCAN

Macbeth—[*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland! that is
a step

On which I must fall down or else o'erleap,
For in my way it liès. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires;
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

Unusual Words and Phrases

establish—settle

harbinger—forerunner

Act I

Scene 5

Story

Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband giving a glowing account of his meeting with the witches and the proof of the statement relating to the title of Cawdor. She immediately decides that her husband is to be King and that Duncan shall be murdered to clear the way to the throne. A messenger brings news that

Duncan is to be her guest that very night. Here is her chance. With almost unbelievable wickedness, she plans his murder and calls on the evil spirits to make her cruel and heartless. She gives Macbeth a wonderful greeting when he arrives, tells him the sun will never see Duncan leave her house, cautions him how to act so as not to arouse suspicion, and bids him leave the management of Duncan's murder to her.

Analysis

Scene 5 is a full-length portrait of one of the greatest characters in drama, painted by herself. Who cannot see her fiery soul glow as she reads Macbeth's letter? Who can miss the towering strength and iron determination in,

"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised"?

Who can fail to see in her burning ambition that impulsive flaw in her make-up when she turns on the messenger her exclamation of ecstatic fury,

"Thou'rt mad to say it"?

Can any one with real blood in his veins read her prayer to the evil spirits without emotion and without feeling that she has some admirable points? Who can read her thrilling greeting to her husband and not see in it the adoring wife? Where can the reader find a more deceitful and ungrateful woman than she pictures herself to be in the passage beginning,

"Your face my thane"?

Where can he find more self-assurance, more positive leadership and more egotism than in the last nine lines of this scene?

Passage to be Memorized

Lady Macbeth— Hie thee hither
 That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
 And chastise with the valour of my tongue
 All that impedes thee from the golden round
 Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
 To have thee crown'd withal.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

Hasten here, so that I may tell you my plans, make you feel this daring that fills me, and drive away the little twinges of conscience which would keep you from the crown. Destiny and the witches seem to have arranged that you should wear it.

Passage to be Memorized

LADY MACBETH'S PRAYER TO THE EVIL SPIRITS

 Come, you spirits
 That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here;
 And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
 Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
 Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
 That no compunctious visitings of nature
 Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
 The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
 And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
 Wherever in your sightless substances
 You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
 And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
 That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
 Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
 To cry, 'Hold, hold!'

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

Come, you evil influences which always accompany murderous thoughts, give me pitiless power, and fill me

brimful with savage cruelty. Make my blood thick so that I shall be insensible to all but wicked feelings. Do not let me become remorseful. Permit no scruples to change my evil intention or prevent its success. Take away all the mildness, mercy and gentleness I have. With your invisible presence aid me in accomplishing this wicked deed. Come also, dark night, and wrap yourself in the blackest smoke of hell, that my sharp knife may not see the gash it makes in Duncan's body and that heaven may not see what is being done and cry, "Stop!"

THE DISSEMBLER

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent
flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for: and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

Your face, my lord, is like a book in which men may read your disloyal thoughts. To entertain our guests look pleasant and happy. Greet them with friendly looks, hearty hand-shakes and joyous words, so that they will feel at home. Pretend you have not a single wicked thought, but be prepared to strike when the time is fitting. Duncan must die to-night, and you shall permit me to arrange the plan by which we will get rid of him. Then we will rule in the future with absolute power as King and Queen of Scotland.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

NOTE THE EAGERNESS, THE CONFIDENCE, THE UNMISTAK-
 ABLE BELIEF IN SELF AND THE AMBITION IN
 LADY MACBETH'S CHARACTER

Lady Macbeth—‘They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me “Thane of Cawdor;” by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with “Hail, king that shalt be!” This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.’

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
 What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
 It is too full o’ the milk of human kindness
 To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;
 Art not without ambition, but without
 The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst
 highly

That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
 And yet wouldst wrongly win: thou ’ldst have, great
 Glamis,

That which cries ‘Thus thou must do, if thou have
 it;

And that which rather thou dost fear to do
 Than wishest should be undone.’ Hie thee hither,
 That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
 And chastise with the valour of my tongue
 All that impedes thee from the golden round,
 Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
 To have thee crown’d withal.

THE IMPULSIVE LADY MACBETH

- Lady Macbeth*— What is your tidings?
Messenger—The king comes here to-night.
Lady Macbeth— Thou'rt mad to say it!
 Is not thy master with him? who, were 't so,
 Would have inform'd for preparation.
Messenger—So please you, it is true; our thane is coming.
 One of my fellows had the speed of him,
 Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
 Than would make up his message.
Lady Macbeth— Give him tending;
 He brings great news.

THE AMBITIOUS GREETING OF AN ADMIRING WIFE AND THE
GENTLE BUT SUBTLE REPLY OF HER HERO-HUSBAND

- Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
 Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
 Thy letters have transported me beyond
 This ignorant present, and I feel now
 The future in the instant.
Macbeth— My dearest love,
 Duncan comes here to-night.
Lady Macbeth— And when goes hence?
Macbeth—To-morrow, as he purposes.

Unusual Words and Phrases

missives—letters or messengers

hie—hasten

pour—talk with spirit

chastise—reduce to obedience

golden round—crown

metaphysical—phenomenal

pall—cover

dunnest—darkest

dispatch—management

masterdom—undisputed power

Act I

Scene 6

Story

Duncan arrives at Inverness with his sons and Banquo, Lennox, Macduff, Ross, Angus and attendants. He is well pleased with the situation of the castle, the sweet air, and the attention and respect with which Lady Macbeth greets him.

Analysis

The dialogue between Macbeth's wife and the King shows how clever she is at dissembling, and how easily she wins the good opinion of the mild and unsuspecting Duncan.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

CONTRAST THE FREE AND INNOCENT MIND OF BANQUO
CONTEMPLATING THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE WITH
THAT TROUBLED CONSCIENCE OF MACBETH
SEEKING THE LIFE OF THE KING

Banquo— This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his loved mansionry that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here; no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle.
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

IN THIS DIALOGUE CONTRAST THE MILD AND GENTLE SENTIMENTS OF DUNCAN WITH THE FEVERISH EFFORTS OF LADY MACBETH TO DECEIVE

Duncan—See, see, our honor'd hostess!
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you

How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady Macbeth— All our service
In every point twice done and then done double
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.

Duncan— Where's the thane of Cawdor?
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor: but he rides well;
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp
him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady Macbeth— Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves and what is theirs, in
compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.

Duncan— Give me your hand;
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess.

Unusual Words and Phrases

jutty—projection

frieze—a tablet over columns, usually ornamented
with sculpture

buttress—a support

coign—a corner or angle

pendent—hanging

procreant—creating, generating

'ild—reward

hermits—beadsmen, debtors

cours'd—raced

purveyor—one in advance, forerunner

holp—helped

compt—account

graces—favors

Act I

Scene 7

Story

Alone, Macbeth debates with himself the proposed murder of Duncan and, concluding that the results will be disastrous to him, he decides to proceed no further in the matter. Lady Macbeth, however, is determined upon the murder. She chides and taunts him until he agrees to slay Duncan.

Analysis

The conflict between an evil ambition and Macbeth's conscience ably seconded by fear makes this scene most interesting and instructive. It shows Macbeth's weakness of character and his wife's strength of will. He cannot withstand her charge of cowardice; his scruples give way before her withering scorn and contempt; and her plausible plan of intoxicating Duncan's guards and charging them with the murder overcomes his fear. Filled with misgivings, he reluctantly consents, trusting to her ability to kill Duncan without incurring suspicion.

Lady Macbeth's character as a strong-willed, dominating, heartless, ambitious woman is well portrayed. She would risk everything—their peace of mind, prosperity, her husband's love, even life itself—for a mad ambition.

Passages to be Memorized

"TO MURDER OR NOT TO MURDER"

Macbeth—If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if th' assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease, success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends th' ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the other.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

If the assassination of Duncan would not be followed by investigation and punishment, then it would be good to kill him as soon as possible. If he could be removed without involving me in danger, and if I could be certain of ruling as his successor during my

life, I'd risk the chance of punishment in the life to come. But in cases of murder, we are subject to trial in this world, and when we take another's life, we show the world what punishment it should give us. This justice which exacts "an eye for an eye" would make us drink the poison we mix for our victim. In my house Duncan should be doubly safe. In the first place, I am his cousin and his subject, and standing in these relations to him I should protect, not attack him. In the second place, I am his host, and by the laws of hospitality I should guard him against injury, instead of inflicting it myself. Furthermore, he has been so mild in exercising his duties as King, has been so just and irreproachable, that the remembrance of his good qualities will incite the people to demand that his murderer be punished. Pity for him will arouse the people against me. The wickedness of the deed will be brought home to everyone. Finally, I have no reason to urge me to commit this deed except the desire to wear his crown, and in trying to obtain it, I shall forfeit my life.

LADY MACBETH'S CONTEMPT FOR HER HUSBAND'S
HESITATION

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? Hath it slept
since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting '*I dare not*' wait upon '*I would*,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

Was the hope of being King, in which you wrapped yourself, nothing more than a drunken idea? Have you allowed it to sleep since then? Does it now awaken to shudder and turn pale at the prospect of actually doing what it had already accomplished so boldly in thought? I consider your love for me, then, weak and fickle, and, like your hope, of little value. Are you afraid to be as bold and daring in your deeds as you are in your desires? You crave the crown, and yet would be such a coward in your own estimation, as to allow your foolish fears, which say, "I dare not," to thwart your great ambition, which should say, "I would," like the poor cat that wanted fish but was afraid of wetting her feet to get them.

LADY MACBETH REPROACHES HER HUSBAND

What beast was 't then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness
now

Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

What kind of beast made you suggest to me this idea of putting Duncan out of the way and ruling in his place? When you were willing to do it in your

thoughts, you were a man; making yourself King, you would be a much greater man. Neither the time nor the place was favorable for carrying out your plan when you suggested it, yet you felt at that moment that you could provide both. He has given us the opportunity by coming here under our own roof, and, now that you have him in your power, you weaken and propose to let the chance slip away. I have been a mother and know how tender it is to love the babe that draws its life from me, but, while it was smiling in my face, I would have refused to nurse it and would have dashed out its brains if I had so promised, as you did.

THE COURAGEOUS LEADER

Lady Macbeth— We fail!
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep,—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him,—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince,
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th' unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

Pooh! We cannot fail. Only make up your mind to it and we will succeed. When Duncan lies in a sound sleep brought on by his long, tiresome journey to-day from Forres here, I with wine and carousing will so overcome his two bodyguards, that their mem-

ories, guardians of their brains, shall be like smoky vapor, and their minds full of fumes like the top of a still. While they are sleeping like swine, steeped in drink and dead to the world, we can work our will, not only upon the helpless Duncan, but also upon his drunken officers, who will be blamed for our enormous crime.

THE REAL MACBETH

Macbeth— Prithee, peace!
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH INTENDS TO MAKE THE PRETENDED
MOURNING OF HERSELF AND HUSBAND CLEAR
THEM OF DUNCAN'S MURDER

Lady Macbeth— Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar
Upon his death?

Unusual Words and Phrases

trammel—to catch up
surcease—end
jump—risk
faculties—powers
striding—straddling
cherubim—angels
couriers—messengers
adhere—suit
wassail—carousing, drinking
convince—subdue
limbeck—the cap of a still
spongy—drunken
quell—murder

Act II

Scene 1

Story

Shortly after midnight, leaving the King's apartment in the castle at Inverness, Banquo and Fleance are on their way to their own rooms and are met by Macbeth. Banquo presents him with a diamond for his wife, from the King, and then brings up the subject of the witches' prophecy. Macbeth pretends not to think of it, but vaguely suggests that if Banquo will co-operate with him it will be to his advantage. Suspecting that Macbeth may be plotting to win the crown, Banquo cautiously offers to listen to what he has to propose, provided that it will not involve his honesty or his loyalty to the King. Macbeth bids him good-night and Banquo and Fleance leave. Left alone, Macbeth is almost overcome by fear of the horrible crime he is about to commit. To divert suspicion in case Banquo should hear a signal bell, Macbeth in a loud tone tells a servant to ask his mistress to ring the bell when his drink is ready. He indulges in a short soliloquy, which shows the perturbed state of his mind, now so upset that he imagines he sees a dagger in the air and tries to grasp it. Nevertheless, at a signal agreed upon with his wife, he summons up his courage and goes out to murder Duncan.

Analysis

This scene prepares the reader for the coming murder. The midnight hour is one when almost all good people are asleep. Banquo has a premonition that something evil is about to happen. Note how generous and grateful to Macbeth the King is in his last hours. Macbeth, with guilty conscience, seeks Ban-

quo's assistance, but the latter is loyal to his King and will not be tempted. The famous dagger scene shows Macbeth's first hallucination, and thus prepares the reader for the greater one in the Banquet scene of Act III.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

Banquo—Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!

DUNCAN'S LAST ACTS WERE DEEDS OF KINDNESS

Banquo—What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed.
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.

IN THIS DIALOGUE, CONTRAST THE FEARLESS INDEPENDENCE
OF THE HONEST BANQUO WITH THE HEDGING,
INDEFINITE MANNER OF MACBETH

Banquo—All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters;
To you they have show'd some truth.

Macbeth—I think not of them;
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

Banquo—At your kind'st leisure.

Macbeth—If you shall cleave to my consent, when 't is,
It shall make honor for you.

Either my eyes have been deceived by my other senses or, if they see aright, they are worth all the rest. You are still before my eyes, and now I see drops of blood on your blade and handle which I did not see before. There is no dagger there. This murderous affair has so upset me that I only imagine I see a weapon in the air.

Unusual Words and Phrases

husbandry—thrift

candles—stars

largess—gifts of money

offices—servants' departments

cleave—adhere to

augment—increase

franchis'd—kept open, free

sensible—tangible

palpable—that which may be taken hold of

marshall'st—leads

dudgeon—handle

gouts—drops

Hecate—Queen of Witchcraft

Tarquin—Sextus Tarquinius

Act II

Scene 2

Story

Her courage bolstered by wine, Lady Macbeth waits impatiently in the court for the return of her husband from Duncan's chamber. Macbeth, beside himself with fear, enters, carrying the bloody daggers with which he has slain the King. She, with her usual presence of mind, commands him to take them back and to smear the grooms with blood so that suspicion will

rest on them. But he will not move. He is afraid even to think of what he has done. Knowing that the daggers must be put back, she does the deed herself. When she returns, a knocking within the castle causes her to hurry her shaking husband to his chamber lest they be discovered.

Analysis

This scene shows Macbeth's weakness and his wife's strength. He is overcome with fear and remorse and cannot be persuaded to return to the scene of his crime. On the other hand, confronted by the necessity of avoiding suspicion as the perpetrators of the crime, Lady Macbeth does not hesitate to enter the murder chamber and smear Duncan's blood on the intoxicated grooms so that they shall pay the penalty for her husband's act.

Passage to be Memorized

THE SLEEP-WALKING OF LADY MACBETH FORESHADOWED

Macbeth—Methought I heard a voice cry, '*Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep*';—the innocent sleep;
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast.

Passages to be Studied for Character and Contrast

CONTRAST THE CALLOUSNESS, THE PRESENCE OF MIND, THE
COURAGE AND THE LEADERSHIP OF LADY MACBETH IN
THE FOLLOWING DIALOGUE WITH THE REGRET,
THE WEAKNESS, THE FEAR AND THE RAVING
OF HER HUSBAND

Lady Macbeth—Who was it that thus cried? Why,
worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go, get some water,

And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
 Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
 They must lie there. Go carry them; and smear
 The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macbeth— I'll go no more.
 I am afraid to think what I have done;
 Look on 't again I dare not.

Lady Macbeth— Infirm of purpose!
 Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead
 Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood
 That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
 I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
 For it must seem their guilt.

[*Exit. Knocking within.*]
Macbeth— Whence is that knocking?
 How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
 What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine
 eyes.
 Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
 Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will
 rather
 The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
 Making the green one red.

Re-enter LADY MACBETH

Lady Macbeth—My hands are of your color; but I shame
 To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I
 hear a knocking
 At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.
 A little water clears us of this deed.
 How easy is it, then! Your constancy
 Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*] Hark!
 more knocking.
 Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us
 And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
 So poorly in your thoughts.

Macbeth—To know my deed, 't were best not know my-
 self. [*Knocking within.*]
 Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou
 couldst! [*Exeunt.*]

Contrast the Lady Macbeth in this dialogue with the woman who cannot sleep in Act V, Scene 1, and note Shakespeare's ability to portray the troubled mind.

Unusual Words

surfeited—filled to excess

possets—hot drinks taken at bed time

confounds—ruins

ravell'd—untwisted

sleave—soft floss silk, unworked silk

multitudinous—innumerable

incarnadine—to dye red

Act II

Scene 3

Story

Macduff and Lennox, who have been sleeping outside the castle, rouse the sleepy porter by their knocking. He admits them after repeated knockings. They are joined in a short time by Macbeth, who pretends that he has also been aroused by the knocking. Macduff asks to see the King and is led to the royal apartment by Macbeth, who does not enter. Lennox meanwhile tells Macbeth of storms and supernatural noises heard during the night. Discovering the murder, Macduff rushes horror-struck from the King's chamber and tells what he has seen. Macbeth and Lennox hurry to the King's bedside, while Macduff awakens the household. Macbeth's wife comes in excitedly and close behind her follows Banquo. Macbeth and Lennox return and at the same time, Malcolm and Donalbain, the King's sons, make their appearance

and are informed of the murder. Lennox accuses the grooms. The King's sons decide to leave Scotland to save their own lives.

Analysis

The purpose of the Porter's scene is to give relief and relaxation to the spectator, who has been worked up to the highest tension. It serves as a contrast to the horrible picture of the fear-crazed Macbeth.

Macbeth's pretended fury in murdering the grooms did not deceive Banquo nor the King's sons. Probably he killed the grooms as much to stop their tongues as to simulate outraged innocence and righteousness. But suspicion immediately fell upon him. Why should the trusted grooms, even though intoxicated, have wanted to slay their good King? What could they hope to gain thereby? On the other hand, Macbeth had much to gain by the removal of Duncan. Banquo had not forgotten the witches' prophecy and he at once suspected Macbeth of pretense and treason and proposed an investigation. The King's sons also suspected a plot against the throne and were most suspicious of their nearest relation, Macbeth—who had the most to gain by the murder as he was next in line, after themselves, to the throne.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE HUMOROUS PORTER

Porter—Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there i' the name of Beezlebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here

you'll sweat for't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further; I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*]

THE SUPERNATURAL

Lennox—The night has been unruly. Where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatched to the woeful time. The obscure
bird
Clamored the livelong night; some say, the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

MACDUFF ANNOUNCES THE MURDER OF DUNCAN

Macduff—O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee.

Lennox }
Macbeth } What's the matter?

Macduff—Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building.

Macbeth—What is 't you say? the life?

Lennox—Mean you his majesty?

Macduff—Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! Up, up, and see
The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror. Ring the bell.

BANQUO REBUKES LADY MACBETH'S LACK OF FEELING

Lady Macbeth—What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? Speak, speak!

Macduff— O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak;
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

Enter BANQUO

O Banquo, Banquo!

Our royal master's murdered!

Lady Macbeth— Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

Banquo— Too cruel anywhere.

Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

MACBETH ATTEMPTS TO DISGUISE HIS GUILT BY
PRETENDED GRIEF

Macbeth—Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time; for from this instant
There's nothing serious in mortality.
All is but toys; renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

MALCOLM AND DONALBAIN ARE TOLD THAT THE GROOMS
KILLED THEIR FATHER

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN

Donalbain—What is amiss?

Macbeth—You are, and do not know 't.

The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.

Macduff—Your royal father's murdered.

Malcolm—

O, by whom?

Lennox—Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done 't:
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows.

They stared, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

Macbeth—O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

MACBETH LABORS HARD TO EXPLAIN WHY HE KILLED
THE GROOMS

Macduff—Wherefore did you so?

Macbeth—Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and
furious,

Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.

The expedition of my violent love

Outrun the pauser reason. Here lay Duncan,

His silver skin laced with his golden blood,

And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature

For ruin's wasteful entrance; there, the murderers,

Steep'd in the colors of their trade, their daggers

Unmannerly breech'd with gore. Who could re-
frain,

That had a heart to love, and in that heart

Courage to make 's love known?

LADY MACBETH PRETENDS TO FAINT, EVIDENTLY TO SAVE
HER HUSBAND

Lady Macbeth—

Help me hence, ho!

Macduff—Look to the lady.

BANQUO AS YET IS NOT AFFECTED BY AMBITION

Banquo— Look to the lady;
[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*
And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us.
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence
Against the undivulged pretence I fight
Of treasonous malice.

Macduff— And so do I
All— So all.
Macbeth—Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.
All— Well contented.

THE FLIGHT OF MALCOLM AND DONALBAIN THROWS SUS-
PICION OF THE MURDER ON THEM AND SO
SAVES MACBETH

Malcolm—What will you do? Let's not consort with them:

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

Donalbain—To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

Malcolm— This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away: there's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

Unusual Words and Phrases

equivocate—to make a false statement

carousing—noisy drinking

parallel—equal

sacrilegious—profane

Gorgon—a Greek mythological creature so terrible that all who saw it turned to stone. Macduff implies that to look upon the murdered king would petrify the beholder.

mortality—human life

lees—dregs of liquor

pauser—one who delays

breech—covered as with breeches

Act II

Scene 4

Story

Ross and an old man, mere spectators of the passing show, discuss the strange happenings which have transpired, apparently induced by supernatural agencies. Macduff comes along and tells Ross that Malcolm and Donalbain, on account of their flight, are suspected of having induced the grooms to kill their father and that Macbeth has been made King.

Analysis

The purpose of this scene, in addition to carrying forward the narrative, appears to be principally to keep before the reader the suggestion of the supernatural which runs through the whole play.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

A DIALOGUE ON SIGNS AND OMENS

Old Man—Threescore and ten I can remember well:
Within the volume of which time I have seen

Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore
night

Hath trifled former knowings.

Ross— Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's
act.

Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock, 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:
Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb
When living light should kiss it?

Old Man— 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Ross—And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and
certain—

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

Old Man— 'Tis said they eat each other.

Ross—They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes
That look'd upon 't.

Unusual Words and Phrases

towering—soaring high

hawk'd at—attached on the wing

pretend—intend

suborn'd—procured by collusion

ravin up—devour

benison—blessing

Act III

Scene 1

Story

Banquo, in a room at the palace of Forres, turns over in his mind the late events concerning Macbeth, whom he suspects of being responsible for the murder of Duncan, and the chance of the witches' prophecy, that he would be the father of Kings, coming true. Macbeth, now King, and his wife appear and invite Banquo as their chief guest to a royal banquet which is to be given that night. Fearing Banquo, because of the witches' prophecy about his issue (Act I, Scene 3), Macbeth ascertains his plans for the afternoon and employs two murderers to waylay him and his son, Fleance, and thus prevent the fulfillment of the prophecy of the third witch.

Analysis

Fear is the theme of this scene, fear that Banquo, whom Macbeth knows to be wise and courageous, will expose him as the murderer of Duncan, fear that the witches' prophecy will come true, and fear that Banquo's children will succeed Macbeth as rulers of Scotland. Macbeth discovers that there is no joy in being King under such circumstances, and that he must get rid of Banquo and Fleance, or else the murder of Duncan will be in vain. Steeped in bloody guilt, he therefore arranges a banquet to which he invites father and son so that his assassins may murder them on the way.

Passage to be Memorized

THE FEARS OF A GUILTY KING

Macbeth— To be thus is nothing,
But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd; 'tis much he
dares;
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear; and under him
My genius is rebuked; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the
sisters,
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then prophet-like,
They hailed him father to a line of kings;
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings.
Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
And champion me to the utterance!

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

There is no glory in being a king and standing in fear of a subject. A deep-seated dread of Banquo oppresses me. In the nobility of his character there is much to be feared by me. He has great courage and his intrepidity is balanced by a wise discretion which saves him from rash acts. He is the only person

whom I fear; and he overawes my spirit, as, it is said, Mark Antony's spirit was overawed by Octavius Cæsar. Banquo reproved the witches when they called me, "King that shall be" and ordered them to speak to him, a command which they obeyed, predicting that his sons and descendants would be kings. The crown and sceptre they gave me are only worthless baubles and are to be torn from me by a stranger's hand instead of passing to my own kin. If this be true, I have committed crimes only to benefit his descendants; for them I have murdered the good Duncan, filled my conscience with hatreds for them, and sold my soul to the devil that they may be kings, that Banquo's issue may be kings! Before I let this happen, I challenge fate and I will fight to the utmost.

*Passages to be Carefully Studied for an Explanation
of Banquo's Character*

BANQUO BAFFLES MACBETH

Macbeth—Here's our chief guest.

Lady Macbeth— If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming.

Macbeth—To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

Banquo— Let your highness
Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.

Macbeth—Ride you this afternoon?

Banquo—Ay, my good lord.

Macbeth—We should have else desired your good advice,
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is't far you ride?

Banquo—As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

Macbeth— Fail not our feast.

Banquo—My lord, I will not.

Macbeth—We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow,
When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till your return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

Banquo—Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon 's.

Macbeth—I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell. [Exit *Banquo*.

Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night: to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you!

The surrender of Banquo through the influence of the witches and his ambition to be "father to a line of kings" makes the foregoing dialogue a chat between two hypocrites. Banquo seeks advancement. Macbeth courts security. The first is stupid; the second is a clever plotter. The subject serves the king knowing him to be a murderer; the king accepts his services in order to put him out of the way. Banquo answers all his sovereign's questions without even suspecting the motive of his chief; Macbeth commands his chief guest not to fail his feast and the chief guest though dead obeys.

MACBETH PLANS BANQUO'S DEATH

Macbeth—Your spirits shine through you. Within this
hour at most

I will advise you where to plant yourselves ;
 Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,
 The moment on 't ; for 't must be done to-night,
 And something from the palace ; always thought
 That I require a clearness : and with him—
 To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—
 Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
 Whose absence is no less material to me
 Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
 Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart :
 I'll come to you anon.

Both Murderers— We are resolved, my lord.

*Macbeth—*I'll call upon you straight : abide within.

[Exeunt Murderers.]

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,
 If it find heaven, must find it out to-night.

Unusual Words and Phrases

posterity—future generations

verities—truths

oracles—prophet

indissoluble—not soluble

Go not my horse the better—if my horse does not
 travel faster than usual

twain—two

bestowed—deposited safely

parricide—murder of a father

while then—until then

genius—guiding spirit

chid—reproved

sceptre—a staff borne by a sovereign

issue—lineal descendants

filed—defiled

rancors—hatred

vessel of my peace—my conscience

mine eternal jewel—my soul

utterance—last extremity
borne in hand—beguiled
predominant—having superior power
clept—called
buffets—struggles
perfect spy o' the time—exact time
the moment on't—the time to do it

Act III

Scene 2

Story

Macbeth has not disclosed to his wife his plot to kill Banquo and Fleance. Blind to the change that has come over her husband since he murdered Duncan, and expecting to continue as his chief adviser, she lectures him for brooding too much over his crime. He is tortured by remorse and envies Duncan, whose troubles are over. Taking her only partially into his confidence, he warns her that there is no security for them while Banquo and Fleance live. She reminds him that they are mortal, whereupon, catching the drift of her suggestion, in figurative language, he hints that both will soon be out of his way.

Analysis

The reader will notice a change which has come over Macbeth since he dipped his daggers in Duncan's blood. He requires no nagging or reproaches now to urge him on to further crimes. Fear, ever-present fear of Banquo and Fleance, is motive enough to drive him on to his ruin.

Passages to be Memorized

A TORTURED KING

Macbeth—We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it;
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth. But let
The frame of things disjoint, both the worlds
suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

We have weakened our enemies, but have not destroyed them. They will recover, and, therefore, they are still dangerous to us. Rather than live in fear of them, unable to sleep for fear of the discovery of our crimes, and with horrid visions of Banquo's sons displacing us as King, we will tear the universe to pieces, regardless of the cost to us in this world or the next. We might better be dead, and so rid of all worry, as Duncan is, than live in this frenzy of fear. Duncan, in his grave, unmindful of earthly troubles, sleeps peacefully. Neither our disloyalty, nor murderer's daggers, poisoned food nor drink, such as we fear, nor traitors at home, nor foreign enemies, can harm him more.

MACBETH DECIDES TO KILL BANQUO

Macbeth—Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,

And with thy bloody and invisible hand
 Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
 Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the
 crow
 Makes wing to the rooky wood;
 Good things of day begin to droop and drowse:
 While night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
 Thou marvell'st at my words, but hold thee still:
 Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
 So, prithee, go with me.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

It is better that you should not know what I am going to do, my dear. When you learn that I have put my remaining enemies out of the way you will approve and praise the act. Hurry, obscure light, blot out the light of day, which, out of pity, enables everything to be seen, so that Banquo and Fleance cannot get even a hint of the terrible fate that awaits them. In the dark I will destroy both and thus prevent the fulfillment of the witches' prophecy that Banquo's issue shall be kings and thereby I shall be enabled to sleep again in peace. Now the day is waning, and the crows are flying to their nests in the woods. The honest, harmless things that live and act in the daylight are becoming sleepy, and the evil powers that work in darkness are waking up. My words surprise you, but have patience. Our putting Duncan out of the way has placed us in a weak position, which we must strengthen by getting rid of Banquo and Fleance. Now, pray, come away with me.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

A PICTURE OF TWO UNHAPPY CRIMINALS

Lady Macbeth— Nought's had, all's spent,
 Where our desire is got without content.

'T is safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have
died
With them they think on? Things without all
remedy
Should be without regard; what's done is done.

MACBETH FORESHADOWS THE FATE OF BANQUO

Macbeth—There's comfort yet; they are assailable.
Then be thou jocund; ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's sum-
mons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be
done
A deed of dreadful note.

Unusual Words and Phrases

scotch'd—bruised

close—heal

ecstasy—excitement

sleek—smooth

vizards—masks

scorpions—scourges

etern—everlasting

jocund—gay

cloister'd—within cloisters

shard-borne—borne on scaly wings

seeling night—night that closes the eyes

rooky wood—wood where crows roost

Act III

Scene 3

Story

Banquo and Fleance, returning from a ride, and intending to be present at Macbeth's banquet, are way-laid by murderers employed by Macbeth. Banquo is murdered but Fleance escapes.

Analysis

This scene is the climax of the play. The escape of Fleance is the first check which Macbeth has received. From now on all his efforts produce only failure after failure until he is finally overthrown.

The scene is also interesting because it introduces the unknown third murderer. Who this mysterious person is, has baffled all critics. Some authorities argue that it was Macbeth himself; others, that it was some confidant of his. There is ample evidence in the following scene to prove that the man was not Macbeth. Even as Lord Scroop held the key to all of Henry V's counsels and knew the very bottom of the king's soul, so it is possible that Macbeth, too, had in his masked man a trusted friend whom he sent to direct the murder of Banquo and Fleance.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

BANQUO WAS MURDERED ABOUT SUNDOWN

First Murderer— Then stand with us;
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.
Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

BANQUO'S LAST WORDS FORESHADOW MACBETH'S FALL

Banquo—O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge. O slave!

[*Dies. Fleance escapes.*

lated—late, overdue

Act III

Scene 4

Story

Macbeth welcomes his guests to the banquet. Before taking his seat at the table, he has a few words with one of the murderers, who appears at the door to say that Banquo has been killed, but that the son has escaped. He is grievously disappointed that Fleance is still alive. Wrapt in gloomy thoughts of the trouble Fleance may cause, he has to be called to the table by the queen. Approaching the diners, Macbeth finds his chair occupied by the ghost of Banquo. He loses control of himself. His guilty conscience causes him to rave in terror and he cries out to the ghost not to accuse him of Banquo's murder. Lady Macbeth makes excuses for her husband and calms him temporarily, but the ghost appears a second time, whereupon the frenzy of Macbeth gets beyond control and he reveals his fatal secret to the guests. Thereupon she abruptly breaks up the banquet and dismisses the guests, with—

“At once, good night;
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.”

After the guests depart Macbeth's suspicion is aroused against Macduff for his failure to attend the banquet and

in desperation at the situation in which he finds himself he decides to seek the witches the next day and learn the worst that is in store for him.

Analysis

This scene discloses the power which the weird sisters had attained over Macbeth. Moving onward from crime to crime, led by their supernatural predictions, he loses confidence in himself, and even in his wife, and turns to them for assistance. Thwarted by the escape of Fleance, unnerved by the supernatural appearance of the ghost, the brave soldier breaks down under the strain. Lady Macbeth's ability to lead reasserts itself in this scene as she tries to account to the guests for his strange conduct, and in abruptly dismissing them. But in spite of her efforts, the secret comes out. That she realizes the condition of his mind is shown by the fact that she does not reproach him after the guests depart but advises him to go to bed and sleep.

Passages to be Carefully Studied for Characterization

MACBETH FEARS FLEANCE

Macbeth—[*Aside*] Then comes my fit again. I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air;
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

LADY MACBETH TRIES TO EXCUSE HER HUSBAND'S INFIRMITY

Lady Macbeth—Sit, worthy friends; my lord is often thus,

And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep
seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well. If much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion.
Feed, and regard him not.

HIS WIFE'S RIDICULE FAILS TO DRIVE AWAY
MACBETH'S FEAR

Lady Macbeth— O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear.
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,
Impostors to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

MACBETH FEARS NOTHING BUT GHOSTS

Macbeth—What man dare, I dare.
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger,
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble. Or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence! *[Exit Ghost.]*

MACBETH SUSPECTS HIS THANES, ESPECIALLY MACDUFF

Macbeth—I hear it by the way; but I will send.
There's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters.
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst.

MACBETH MUST KILL OTHERS OR THEY WILL PUT HIM
OUT OF THE WAY

For mine own good
All causes shall give way. I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.
Strange things I have in head that will to hand,
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

Unusual Words and Phrases

nonpareil—one without an equal
trenched—long deep cuts
venom—poison
vouch'd—assured
momentary—lasting only for a moment
grandam—grandmother
maws—stomachs
kites—birds of prey
weal—state
avaunt—begone
speculation—intelligence
augurs—predictions
maggot-pies—magpies
choughs—crows

Act III

Scene 5

Story

The witches and Hecate have a conference about Macbeth. Hecate says that he shall be persuaded to spurn fate, scorn death, and bear his hopes above wisdom, grace and fear. Through supernatural agencies she plans to instill in him a false sense of security, the better to lead him on to his ruin.

Analysis

The scene is intended to show that the supernatural agencies control Macbeth's future conduct, and are responsible for his downfall.

Passage to be Studied

SECURITY

Hecate—He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove his wisdom, grace and fear;
And you all know security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

Unusual Words and Phrases

beldams—ugly old women

sleights—devices

Act III

Scene 6

Story

Lennox, with subtle irony, in a conversation with another Lord, shows the effect Macbeth's conduct has had upon the nobles. He is now openly accused of the murder of both Duncan and Banquo. The Lord tells Lennox that Macduff has fled to England for aid to overthrow Macbeth.

Analysis

The scene, like the preceding one, serves as a prelude to the scenes which follow. It forecasts the political rebellion that is rising against Macbeth. The irony and sarcasm of Lennox is in Shakespeare's best vein.

Passage to be Studied

THE PULSE OF THE PEOPLE

Lennox—My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther; only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious
Duncan

Was pitied of Macbeth; marry, he was dead:
And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late;
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance
killed,

For Fleance fled; men must not walk too late.

Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous

It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain

To kill their gracious father? Damned fact!

How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight

In pious rage, the two delinquents tear

That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?

Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;

For 't would have anger'd any man alive

To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,

He has borne all things well; and I do think

That had he Duncan's son under his key—

As, an 't please heaven, he shall not—they should
find

What 't were to kill a father; so should Fleance.

But, peace! for from broad words, and 'cause he
failed

His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear,

Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell

Where he bestows himself?

Lord—

The son of Duncan

From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,

Lives in the English court, and is received

Of the most pious Edward with such grace

That the malevolence of fortune nothing

Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff

Is gone to pray the holy king upon his aid

To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward;

That by the help of these, with Him above

To ratify the work, we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honors;
All which we pine for now: and this report
Hath so exasperate the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Act IV

Scene 1

Story

Macbeth, burning with desire to know his fate, seeks the witches in their cave where they have prepared a potent charm. He demands that they produce their masters to answer his questions. Thereupon, an apparition of an armed head appears, then an apparition of a bloody child, and finally one of a child crowned, bearing a tree in his hand. The first warns him to beware of Macduff; the second advises him to be bloody, bold and resolute, for no man of woman born, can harm him; the third advises him to be brave and proud, and declares he shall not be vanquished until Birnam wood comes to Dunsinane hill. Pleased, but not fully satisfied, Macbeth orders the witches to tell him if Banquo's descendants will ever reign in Scotland. The witches then produce a procession of eight kings, descendants of Banquo, the last with a glass in his hand showing still others; and Banquo's ghost follows. Macbeth realizes that his attempts to prevent Banquo's issue from becoming kings are futile. The witches disappear. Lennox approaches and informs the King of Macduff's flight to England. Macbeth in a rage, recalling the warning of the first apparition, announces that he will seize Macduff's castle and kill his wife and children and all his relatives.

Analysis

This scene is not in Shakespeare's best manner. It takes one hundred and fifty-six lines to tell that Banquo's issue will reign and that Macduff is fled to England. In the same number of lines in Act I, Scene 3, without any of the ingredients of the loathsome cauldron, he has given the key to the whole play, *i.e.*: the prophecies that compel action, the portraits of Banquo and Macbeth, and the motives that move them both. The apparitions forecast the following events:

1. The armed head is Macbeth's own struck off by Macduff.
2. The bloody child stands for Macduff (Act V, Scene 8, lines 17-18).
3. The crowned child bearing a tree foretells the coming of Malcolm, who commands each of his soldiers to cut down a bough of Birnam wood and carry it before him.

Passage to be Memorized

Macbeth—Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits;
The flightly purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it; from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and
done;
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a
fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool;
But no more sights!

Paraphrase of the Forgoing Passage

Time, you pass so swiftly that you hardly give the opportunity to carry out my fearful plans. The most devoutly to be wished scheme will not succeed unless action immediately follows intention. From now on, my hand shall instantly obey the promptings of my heart. To prove my head and hand can act together, I'll take Macduff's castle by surprise, seize and put to death his wife, his children, and all who are ill-fated enough to be related to him. This talk is not mere babble. I'll go and do this deed while my blood's hot. Let me see no more such visions as I have just looked upon.

Act IV

Scene 2

Story

In the castle of Fife, Lady Macduff and Ross are speaking of Macduff's sudden journey to England. She does not understand how he could fly and leave his family behind. Fearing to be found at the castle, Ross leaves. Lady Macduff continues the conversation with her young son, telling him that his father is dead and that he was a traitor. The boy sturdily defends his father. A messenger enters and urges her to fly from approaching danger, as he, himself, is fleeing. He goes and a moment later Macbeth's hirelings enter the room and kill Lady Macduff and her children.

Analysis

This scene shows what a bloodthirsty tyrant Macbeth is. We can make allowance for the killing of

Duncan when we consider the slayer's great ambition and the urging of his wife; we can understand the murder of the grooms, when we think how anxious he was to avoid suspicion; we can account for the assassination of Banquo by Macbeth's fear of him; but we can find no justification whatever for the killing of Lady Macduff and her innocent children.

Passage to be Studied

FORCED DIALOGUE

Lady Macduff—Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Ross—I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,

It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.

I take my leave at once.

Lady Macduff—Sirrah, your father's dead;

And what will you do now? How will you live?

Son—As birds do, mother.

Lady Macduff—What, with worms and flies?

Son—With what I get, I mean, and so do they.

Lady Macduff—Poor bird! thou 'ldst never fear the net
nor lime,

The pitfall nor the gin.

Son—Why should I, mother? Poor birds, they are not
set for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

Lady Macduff—Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for
a father?

Son—Nay, how will you do for a husband?

Lady Macduff—Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son—Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

Lady Macduff—Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet
i' faith,

With wit enough for thee.

Son—Was my father a traitor, mother?

Lady Macduff—Ay, that he was.

Son—What is a traitor?

Lady Macduff—Why, one that swears and lies.

Son—And be all traitors that do so?

Lady Macduff—Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son—And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

Lady Macduff—Every one.

Son—Who must hang them?

Lady Macduff—Why, the honest men.

Son—Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

Lady Macduff—Now, God help thee, poor monkey!

But how wilt thou do for a father?

Son—If he were dead, you 'ld weep for him; if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

Lady Macduff—Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

Unusual Words

diminutive—small

cos—a short term for cousin

judicious—prudent, discreet

lime—a sticky substance used to trap birds

gin—a trap or snare

enow—enough

prattler—one who talks idly

laudable—praiseworthy

unsanctified—accursed

shag-ear'd—ears covered with long hair

egg—not yet even a child

fry—small fish

Act IV

Scene 3

Story

Before the king's palace in England, Macduff informs Malcolm of the state of affairs in Scotland, and

urges him to return and take the throne which now belongs to him. Suspicious of all who come from Scotland, Malcolm, fearing treachery, to test Macduff, paints himself a greater villain than Macbeth. But when he learns that Macduff is not an emissary of Macbeth, sent to trap him, Malcolm welcomes him and lets him join a strong English army which is about to march under Siward, against Macbeth. Ross arrives from Scotland, tells them how things are going from bad to worse at home, and then breaks the news to Macduff of the slaughter of his wife and children. Macduff decides to seek Macbeth and obtain vengeance.

Analysis

Some parts of this scene appear as blemishes on a wonderful work of art. For example, lines 140 to 159 have no relation whatever to the plot. The dialogue is unnecessarily prolix. The principal purpose seems to be to carry on the narrative of the play and to paint the characters of Malcolm and Macduff. Although occasionally tedious, it contains several good passages, one of which is:

“Give sorrow words; the grief, that does not speak,
Whispers the o’erfraught heart, and bids it break.”

Unusual Words and Phrases

dolour—sorrow

perchance—perhaps

appease—to pacify, satisfy

affeer’d—confirmed, established

legions—great numbers

luxurious—lustful

avaricious—greedy for gain
malicious—spiteful
smacking—having a taste of
voluptuousness—wickedness
continent—restraining
impediments—obstacles
intemperance—sensuality
convey—indulge
pernicious—injurious, hurtful
foisons—plentiful harvests
verity—truth
fortitude—courage to endure adversity
interdiction—prohibition
over-credulous—inclined to believe without evidence
detraction—slander
assay—test, analysis
ulcerous—having sores
stamp—a stamped coin or medal
niggard—miser
fee-grief—private grief
quarry—dead bodies
oe'r-fraught—overcharged

Act V

Scene 1

Story

In order to defy his enemies, Macbeth leaves the palace at Forres and occupies the strongly fortified castle of Dunsinane. Lady Macbeth's health is broken by remorse. Her soul cannot find repose. She walks and talks in her sleep concerning their crimes—the murder of Duncan, the blood on her hands, the slaughter of

Lady Macduff, and Banquo's ghost. Her physician cannot help her and fears she will commit suicide.

Analysis

This scene gives a last glimpse of the woman who inspired Macbeth to kill Duncan, whose presence of mind kept him from going to pieces, and whose quick action in the banquet scene in dismissing her guests prevented them from learning all of Macbeth's secrets. Remorse for her guilt and fear of the consequences of their crimes have disturbed her peace of mind. In her delirium, she is the supreme portrait of what a shell crime can make of the haughtiest, strongest and bravest.

Passage to be Studied

The following picture contrasted with that in Act I, Scene 5, and with that of Lady Macbeth in the height of her power, Act II, Scene 2:

Lady Macbeth—Yet here's a spot.

Doctor—Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady Macbeth—Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One: two; why, then 'tis time to do it.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old Man to have had so much blood in him.

Doctor—Do you mark that?

Lady Macbeth—The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

Doctor—Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gent.—She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

Lady Macbeth—Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.
Oh, oh, oh!

Doctor—What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

Gent.—I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

Doctor—Well, well, well,—

Gent.—Pray God it be, sir.

Doctor—This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady Macbeth—Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on 's grave.

Doctor—Even so?

Lady Macbeth—To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed!

Unusual Words

perturbation—disturbance

slumb'ry—slumberous

guise—manner, appearance

murky—dark, gloomy

charg'd—laden

on's—of his

annoyance—harm, suicide

mated—confused

Act V

Scene 2

Story

A Scottish force, raised by Angus, Lennox, and others, against Macbeth marches to join the English army under Siward, Malcolm and Macduff near Birnam wood. The nobles discuss Macbeth's condition, some saying he has become insane.

Analysis

This scene shows the effect Macbeth's crimes and tyranny have produced on his countrymen. His secret murders have turned almost everyone against him and he is universally hated.

Unusual Words

mortified—subdued, dying
faith-breach—treachery
weal—commonwealth, state
purge—to clean, to purify

Act V

Scene 3

Story

Macbeth is informed by a frightened servant that the English force is approaching. Feeling safe and secure, and believing in the statements of the witches, he boldly defies his enemies, since he thinks Dunsinane capable of withstanding any siege. He inquires as to his wife's condition and is informed that her trouble is mental and that her physician is powerless to aid her. He offers the doctor a great reward to cure her, and puts on his armor to meet his enemies.

Analysis

This scene shows that Shakespeare is a master of the specific word. "Cream-faced loon," "goose look," "lily-livered boy," "linen cheeks," and "whey-faced," are powerful expressions and they make us see the fear of the boy as no other words could. It also shows how fully Macbeth relied on the predictions of the witches. His determination to fight until the flesh was hacked from his bones, seems to be rather a courage born of desperation than true bravery. No other course was possible. He was sickened at heart by his wife's condition and the realization that she was his only friend and that all others despised and hated him. He seems also to have had a presentiment that a crisis in his affairs was approaching, and that the crucial battle would either make him safe or ruin him.

*Passages to be Memorized**Macbeth*—

This push

Will cheer me ever, or dis-seat me now.
I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare
not.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

This struggle will make me secure forever if I am victorious, or pull me from the throne if I am defeated. I do not care very much which way it goes. I have entered the autumn period of my life. The consolations of old age, such as, to be held in high esteem, to

be loved and obeyed, and to have a host of friends, can never be mine. On the contrary I shall be hated and surrounded by false followers whose flattery I would like to expose, but cannot afford to do so.

Macbeth—Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

Can you not assist a disordered brain, take from the memory an ever-present grief which feeds upon it, clear the mind of its deep-seated worries and with some pleasant remedy restore her former cheer and make her forget those black thoughts which have destroyed her happiness?

Unusual Words

epicures—persons devoted to luxury

lily-livered—cowardly

patch—servant

moe—more

skirr—scour

cast—analyze

pristine—original

Act V

Scene 4

Story

Near Birnam wood the forces of Malcolm and Macduff unite. Malcolm directs that every soldier shall

cut down and carry before him a bough from the trees in order to conceal the number of soldiers coming to attack Dunsinane.

Analysis

This scene prepares the reader for the coming fulfillment of the prophecy of the third apparition (the child crowned and bearing a tree in his hand) that Macbeth would be safe until Birnam wood should come against him. Malcolm's idea of deceiving Macbeth as to the size of his army by having each soldier carry a branch from the trees, shows that he possesses some skill as a soldier. Of course he was unacquainted with the witches' prophecy—the prophecy he was thus helping to make true.

Act V

Scene 5

Story

Macbeth decides to stand a siege, instead of going out to meet the enemy, and is confident that the approaching forces cannot capture the castle. He hears with apparent indifference, perhaps assumed to conceal despair, of the death of his wife—the woman who was once his “dearest partner of greatness.” A messenger tells him that Birnam wood is moving towards Dunsinane, which causes him to realize that the spirits' prophecy is about to be fulfilled. Despair overcomes him, and instead of standing siege in his stronghold, he determines to meet his enemies in the open, and if need be, to die fighting, as he has nothing left to live for.

Analysis

This scene gives two pictures of Macbeth, one, of his greatness, the other of his weakness. In his hour of peril and despair Lady Macbeth's death is not a great event. Like Cæsar, like Napoleon, women were of secondary importance to him.

"Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly" is the laconic command of a great man to whom time is everything. Cæsar could not have been more direct nor terse. Brought to a realization of his hopeless situation—the magnitude of his crimes, the loss of his wife, who was his only confidant and mainstay, his foes approaching in great force, the witches' prophecy that he would be vanquished when Birnam wood came against him, which was now occurring,—he loses heart, wearies of life, wishes it were over, cannot bear the uncertainty and in desperation goes out to fight that the matter of victory or defeat, life or death, shall be decided quickly.

Passage to be Memorised

Macbeth—She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Passage

She had to die sometime, and the present hour when everything is going against me is as good a time as any other for her to be relieved of her troubles. All the days that have gone have led deluded and misguided mortals to the grave. I wish I were dead. Life is nothing but a moving shadow, a poor actor who plays his part for a little while and then disappears from the scene forever. It is like a story told by a person without intelligence—a conglomeration of words which mean nothing.

Unusual Words

forced—reinforced

cling—wither

sooth—truth

Act V

Scene 6

Story

Malcolm and the others with their army approach the castle of Dunsinane. He orders the men to throw away their leafy boughs and show themselves. Then the trumpets sound and the battle begins.

Act V

Scene 7

Story

In the battle, Macbeth, confident that no man born of woman can harm him, fights and slays young Siward. Macduff goes about hunting for Macbeth. The castle surrenders.

Unusual Words

staves—weapons
bruited—noised
rendered—surrendered

Act V

Scene 8

Story

Macbeth and Macduff meet. Recalling the spirits' warning to beware of Macduff of all men, Macbeth tries to avoid fighting him. But Macduff attacks him furiously. Macbeth boasts that Macduff cannot harm him because he was of woman born, whereupon Macduff informs him that he owes his life to a Cæsarian operation. Macbeth loses heart at this, curses the witches and refuses to fight. But Macduff goads him with taunts so he fights on until killed by Macduff. Macduff cleaves the tyrant's head from his body and takes it to Malcolm, who becomes King of Scotland.

Unusual Words

Intrenchant—incapable of being cut
palter—to equivocate
kingdom's pearl—King's crown

HAMLET ANALYZED

PERSONS REPRESENTED

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark
HAMLET, Son to the former, and Nephew to the present King
POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain
HORATIO, Friend to Hamlet
LAERTES, Son to Polonius
VOLTIMAND, }
CORNELIUS, } Courtiers
ROSENCRANTZ, }
GUILDENSTERN }
OSRIC, a Courtier
Another Courtier
A Priest
MARCELLUS, }
BERNARDO, } Officers
FRANCISCO, a Soldier
REYNALDO, Servant to Polonius
A Captain. An Ambassador
Ghost of Hamlet's Father
FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway

GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark, and Mother of Hamlet
OPHELIA, Daughter of Polonius

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Grave-diggers, Sailors,
Messengers, and other Attendants

SCENE: Elsinore

HAMLET ANALYZED

Act I

Scene 1

Story

On a platform before the castle at Elsinore, the home of the Danish King, the guard is being changed at midnight. Hearing that a ghost had appeared to the watch, and doubting the rumor, Horatio, a scholar and philosopher, comes to satisfy himself. While he is conversing with the two officers on duty, a figure exactly like that of the King of Denmark, who had recently died, joins them. Horatio questions the ghostly visitor, which, without answering him, vanishes. While Horatio is explaining the warlike preparations going on everywhere in Denmark, the ghost appears a second time. Again, Horatio questions the strange visitor without effect until it gradually melts away at the sound of a cock's crowing. Horatio suggests that Hamlet, the son of the dead king, ought to know about this apparition, which, dumb to them, perhaps will speak to him. They agree to tell Hamlet, and, as it is morning, separate.

Analysis

This scene, through the words, "I am sick at heart," of Francisco, who has heard the rumor of an unwelcome ghostly visitor seen by his associates on two previous evenings, casts an atmosphere of gloom over the play which runs through every act. The appearance of the

ghost, to arouse the curiosity of the people and to wrap their minds in mystery, has the same function here as the witches have in *Macbeth* and the storm in *Julius Cæsar*.

Another fact about the scene worthy of notice is that it focuses attention upon the ghost and Hamlet. Bernardo and Marcellus prepare one for the entrance of the ghost and Horatio mentions young Hamlet as the proper man to make it explain its visit from the grave. Hamlet at once becomes interesting and his importance is foreshadowed.

The scene has a further interest for students of Hamlet because it introduces Horatio who, outside of his plot character, could be easily omitted. Like Ross in *Macbeth*, Shakespeare uses him to give dignity to what seems credulous, to corroborate the seemingly improbable and to advance the story.

Passage to be Carefully Studied

Horatio—

That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him),
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit with his life all those his lands
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror;
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant,
And carriage of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,

Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in 't; which is no other—
As it doth well appear unto our state—
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Students should compare the foregoing passage with the dialogue between Hamlet and Horatio, Act I, Scene 2, and Horatio's question in Act I, Scene 2, with his own statement in Act V, Scene 2:

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane
Here's yet some liquor left.

Passages to be Studied

OMENS

Horatio—A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precursor of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—
But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!

THE HABITS OF GHOSTS

Bernardo—It was about to speak when the cock crew.

Horatio—And then it started like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
 The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
 Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 Awake the god of day; and at his warning,
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 The extravagant and erring spirit hies
 To his confine; and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation.

Marcellus—It faded on the crowing of the cock.
 Some day that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
 And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;
 The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
 No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
 So hallow'd, and so gracious is the time.

MORNING

Horatio—But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
 Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.

Unusual Words and Phrases

carefully—punctually

struck—striking clocks were not invented at the time
 the action is supposed to have taken place in
 Denmark

much—many

quiet—nothing unusual

rivals—partners or companions

ground—country

fantasy—imagination

dreaded—dreadful

of—by

approve—confirm

beating—striking
thou art a scholar—one who could speak Latin
spoke—spoken
Denmark—Shakespeare uses the name of the country for the King of Denmark
sometimes—formerly
on't—of it
might—could
avouch—affirmation
Norway—King of Norway
parley—conference
jump—exactly
gross and scope—general range
toils—causes to toil
cast—casting
mart—market
impress—impressment
divide—distinguish
toward—near at hand
emulate—envious
dared—challenged
seized of—possessed of
moiety competent—sufficient portion
gaged—pledged
unimproved—inexperienced
metal—courage
skirts—boundaries
list—number of outlaws
resolutes—outlaws
stomach—courage
but—than
sort—agree with your supposition
question—reason for

mote—an atom
the moist star—the moon
doomsday—death
precurse—precursor
omen—calamity
climatures—regions
foreknowing—foreknowledge
extorted treasure—ghosts were supposed to guard
hidden treasure
partisan—weapon carried by a soldier
majestical—majestic
extravagant—wandering
confine—abode
probation—proof
bird of dawning—the crowing cock
takes—bewitches
russet—red

Act I

Scene 2

Story

At the opening of the second scene, in a state-room of the castle, the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, lords and attendants assemble. The King then tells how at the death of his brother he became the ruler of Denmark, how he married his brother's widow with the consent of the nobles, how he has prepared to defeat the imminent invasion of young Fortinbras of Norway, and that he is at that moment sending an embassy to the King of Norway, praying him to stop the war-like attitude of young Fortinbras. Granting Laertes, son of Polonius, permission to return to Paris to resume his studies, the King turns to Hamlet and tries to

persuade him from grieving too much over his father's death. The Queen also reasons with her son about the folly of mourning; and the King and Queen both urge him to give up his plan to return to the University of Wittenberg. Hamlet agrees to stay at home, but as soon as he is alone, he pours out his contempt for the King, utters his horror at his mother's marriage and marvels how she could choose a satyr like Claudius in preference to a Titan like his father. His soliloquy is interrupted by the entrance of Bernardo, Marcellus and Horatio who relate their encounter with the apparition. Intensely interested, Hamlet agrees to watch with them, and, as soon as he is alone, longs for night to come, hoping that he may solve the mystery of the ghost.

Analysis

The reasons why this scene is important are as follows:

1. It introduces Claudius, the King, and portrays him as diplomatic, far-sighted and deceitful.
2. It makes the reader acquainted with Hamlet and his harrowing grief.
3. It foreshadows the clash between Hamlet and Claudius.
4. It suggests that news of the appearance of his father's ghost makes Hamlet suspect Claudius of a deeper crime than that of marrying his mother.

It has, however, several inconsistent statements. One is that Hamlet is not certain whether he knows Horatio or not. This statement sounds odd. Horatio frankly states that he came to Elsinore to attend the funeral of the King and, therefore, has been there for two months since the King has been two months dead.

Careless craftsmanship on the part of Shakespeare may

explain this contradiction. Another solution of it, and perhaps the more probable one, is that Hamlet has already begun to practice his antic disposition.

Passages to be Studied

AN ACTIVE KING

King—Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,
Th' imperial jointress to this warlike State,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our State to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him,
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bedrid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait herein; in that the levies,
The lists and full proportions, are all made

Out of his subject: and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king more than the scope
Of these dilated articles allow.
Farewell and let your haste commend your duty.

GENUINE GRIEF

Hamlet—Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not “seems.”
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

ADVICE AGAINST DEEP MOURNING

King—'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
Hamlet, -
To give these mourning duties to your father;
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow; but to persevere
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme

Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
 From the first corse till he that died to-day,
 'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing woe, and think of us
 As of a father; for let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne;
 And with no less nobility of love
 Than that which dearest father bears his son
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,
 It is most retrograde to our desire;
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin and our son.

HAMLET'S IDEAL FATHER

Hamlet—He was a man, take him for all in all,
 I shall not look upon his like again.

HAMLET'S THOUGHTS ON HIS MOTHER'S MARRIAGE

Hamlet—O! that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw and resolve itself into a dew;
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world.
 Fie on 't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
 That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
 But two months dead: nay, not so much, not two:
 So excellent a king; that was, to this,
 Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
 Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on; and yet, within a month,
 Let me not think on 't: Frailty, thy name is woman!
 A little month; or ere those shoes were old
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,

Like Niobe, all tears; why she, even she,—
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
 Would have mourn'd longer,—married with mine
 uncle,
 My father's brother, but no more like my father
 Than I to Hercules: within a month,
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married. O! most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to a second match.
 It is not, nor it cannot come to, good:
 But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Tho memory be green—fresh in one's mind
brow of woe—a sad brow
wisest sorrow—controlled sorrow
sometime—former
jointress—joint partner
defeated—marred
auspicious—hopeful
dropping—tearful
dirge—lamentation
dole—sorrow
barred—excluded
supposal—opinion
disjoint—disjointed
pester—annoy
importing—referring to
writ—written
Norway—the King of Norway
impotent—invalid
gait—preparation
in that—inasmuch as
proportions—number of troops

to business—for business
dilated—copious
lose your voice—be denied your request
native to—connected with
bow then to—ask with humbleness
pardon—leave to depart
laborsome—laborious
hard—obtained by constant pressing
cousin—any kinsman
nighted—black
vailed lids—cast in sorrow
nature—life
suspiration—sighs
fruitful river—tears
havior—behavior
denote—describe
bound—is found
term—period of time
obsequious—suitable sorrow
condolement—grief
incorrect—not resigned
unprevailing—useless
most immediate—next heir
nobility—ennobling
Wittenberg—the University was not founded until
1502
retrograde—contrary
bend you—persuade you
to my heart—near my heart
canon—a religious law, the sixth commandment
bruit—to report loudly
respeaking—echoing
rouse—a deep drink

uses—customs

merely—altogether

Hyperion—the god of the sun

might—could

Act I

Scene 3

Story

Laertes, before going to Paris, cautions his sister, Ophelia, in lines filled with feeling and lyric beauty, not to take too seriously Hamlet's love-making. Polonius, finding brother and sister together, pours out a number of maxims which he asks Laertes to follow while he is in Paris. When Laertes leaves, Polonius questions his daughter as to Hamlet's intentions towards her and commands her to see as little as possible of the Prince in the future.

Analysis

Contrast, or the principle of dramatic relief, is often used by Shakespeare to throw in local color or to prevent his audience from getting satiated with the heavy and serious side of a theme. In Scene 3, he turns from the main subject of Hamlet's mystery and through Polonius, Laertes and Ophelia, paints a fine family group which is only remotely connected with the hero of the play.

Passage to be Memorized

A BROTHERLY ADVISER

Laertes—

Think it no more:

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch

The virtue of his will: but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own:
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honor may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs;
Or lose your heart.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary, then; best safety lies in fear:
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

OPHELIA CAUTIONS HER WAYWARD BROTHER

Ophelia—I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
While, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.

POLONIUS ADVISES LAERTES HOW TO CONDUCT HIMSELF
ON HIS TRAVELS

Polonius— Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous, chief in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

A DOUBTING POLONIUS

Polonius—Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young,
And with a larger tether may he walk
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,

Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,
 Not of that dye which their investments show,
 But mere implorators of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,
 The better to beguile. This is for all:
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to 't, I charge you; come your ways.

Unusual Words and Phrases

convoy—conveyance
a fashion and a toy in blood—a changing and fickle
 affection
suppliance—pastime
crescent—increasing, growing
thews—muscles
temple—the body
soil—stain
cautel—craft, deceit
besmirch—dishonor
unvalued—of little worth
carve—paddle his own canoe
may give his saying deed—as far as he is able to
 carry out his plans
the main voice—the voice of the King and Queen
too credent—too credulous
list—listen to
unmastered—uncontrolled
importunity—incessant asking
chariest—most careful
calumnious—full of calumny
canker—an eating sore
buttons—buds
be disclosed—be unfolded

blastments—flights, withering influences
ungracious—two-faced
puffed—self-important
recks—does not follow his own advice
rede—counsel
fear me not—don't worry about me
occasion—opportunity
character—inscribe indelibly
unproportioned—unsuitable
his act—its act
vulgar—ordinary
do not dull—do not be too ready to shake every hand
opposed—opponent
censure—opinion
costly—as costly
chief—particularly
husbandry—economy
season—ripen
invites—summons
tend—attend
bethought—thought of
of late—recently
'tis put—forced
behoves—becomes
tenders—offers
green—inexperienced
unsifted—untried
sterling—true gold
tender—value
tender me a fool—be a fool
fashion—manner
fashion—fancy
springes—nets

prodigal—lavishly
fire—earnestness
entreatments—favors, invitations
larger tether—more liberty
in few—in few words
brokers—negotiators
investments—dress
implorators—solicitors
breathing—whispering
moment—moment's
charge—command

Act I

Scene 4

Story

At midnight on the platform before the castle the fourth scene opens, with Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus watching for the appearance of the ghost. The apparition appears. Hamlet begs it to state why it disturbs the night and what it desires. The ghost refuses to speak but beckons Hamlet to follow it. Though his friends, through fear of harm it may do him, try to prevent Hamlet from going, he follows the shadow.

Analysis

The first half of this scene is so quiet that the watchers for the ghost talk about the weather and the convivial customs of the country. Some critics find trouble in Horatio's question and deduce from it that he is not a Dane but a foreigner. But the student would not think it strange if a visitor to New York from the Middle West or from the interior of the state should ask amusing questions on his first visit here. Copenhagen, remember, was

the metropolis of Denmark and, no doubt, had many customs different from those of the part of Denmark which Horatio called home. The second part of the scene is famous because it tells of Hamlet's meeting with the ghost and of the ghost's selection of Hamlet to follow it.

HAMLET'S ADDRESS TO HIS FATHER'S GHOST

Hamlet—Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blast from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, Father, Royal Dane; O! answer me:
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Passage to be Studied for Characterization

THE HARM A GHOST MIGHT DO

Horatio—What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,
And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Unusual Words and Phrases

shrewdly—sharply, keenly

eager—sharp

wake—feast late

rouse—drink heavily

wassail—carousal

up-spring reels—wild dances

the triumph—the acceptance of his pledge by his
people

heavy-headed revel—drunken bout

traduced—disgraced

tax'd—criticised

clepe—call

soil—defile

addition—title

at height—at best

mole of nature—growth on the body

his origin—its origin

complexion—temperament

pales—walls

too much o'er leavens—affects too strongly

plausible—pleasing

undergo—accumulate

dram of eale—scrap of evil

doubt—destroy

his scandal—its scandal

questionable shape—a shape that invites question

canonized bones—bones that have received the rights
of burial

hearsed—coffined

cerements—coverings for the dead

inurn'd—interred

oped—opened

glimpses of the moon—glimmering light of the moon
disposition—nature
impartment—communication
waves—beckons
removed—remote
beetles o'er—juts or hangs over
deprive—take away
toys—idle fancies
nerve—muscle
lets me—hinders me
waxes—grows
have after—follow
it—the issue

Act I

Scene 5

Story

When the ghost reaches a lonely part of the platform, Hamlet again commands it to speak, telling it he will go no farther. The ghost then explains that, though it was given out that his death was caused by the sting of a serpent, Claudius was the serpent that poured poison in his ear; that Claudius had secretly won away the love of his Queen; and that he wants his son to avenge his death. As Hamlet agrees to mete out swift punishment to Claudius, the ghost disappears.

Horatio and Marcellus catch up with Hamlet and eagerly question him about what has happened. He evades all their questions at first in an hysterical manner. Then, without giving them the merest scrap of information regarding what the ghost had said to him, he asks them to swear that they will not speak to any one of what they have seen. While he commands them to swear on

his sword, the ghost is heard from the cellar, ordering them to keep the secret to themselves. Satisfied that his friends will not divulge anything, Hamlet confides to Horatio and Marcellus that it will be necessary for him to assume madness. He then extracts from them another oath that, no matter how strangely he may act, they are never to let the slightest suggestion escape that they know he is not mad.

Analysis

From the standpoint of advancing the plot, Scene 5 is important. It verifies in Hamlet's mind his "prophetic soul's" suspicion that Claudius killed his father. It gives him a reason for revenge without which the taking of his uncle's life would be the rankest murder. It contains the ghost's request regarding his attitude toward the Queen, and so gives the key to Hamlet's peculiar actions toward his mother. In addition, it contains the celebrated passages regarding his "antic disposition," or feigning madness, which give all critics who clear him of the charge of insanity their basis for believing he was not mad.

Passage to be Carefully Studied

THE GHOST TELLS HAMLET HOW HIS FATHER WAS
FOULLY MURDERED

Hamlet—Where wilt thou lead me? speak: I'll go no further.

Ghost—Mark me.

Hamlet— I will.

Ghost— My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Hamlet— Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost—Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Hamlet— Speak ; I am bound to hear.

Ghost—So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Hamlet—What?

Ghost—I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood ;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine :
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list !
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

Hamlet—O God !

Ghost—Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Hamlet—Murder !

Ghost—Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Hamlet—Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost— I find thee apt ;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear :
'Tis given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd ; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Hamlet— O my prophetic soul !
My uncle !

Ghost—Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—

O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet! what a falling-off was there;
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigor it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd:
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd;
No reck'ning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not.
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive

Against thy mother aught: leave her to Heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
 The glowworm shows the matin to be near,
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.

Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [Exit.]

Hamlet—O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
 And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my
 heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up.—Remember thee!
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
 Yea, from the table of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
 That youth and observation copied there;
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!
 O most pernicious woman!
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
 My tables, my tables,—meet it is I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark:

[Writing.]

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
 It is, "Adieu, adieu! remember me."
 I have sworn 't.

Unusual Words and Phrases

render—deliver

for the day—during the day

forbid—forbidden

tell—declare

porpentine—porcupine

eternal blazon—revelation

list—listen

in the best—at best
haste me to know't—tell me quickly
apt—ready
shouldst—wouldst
Lethe wharf—bank of Lethe
process—account
rankly—grossly
adulterate—adulterous
soft—keep silent
secure—supposedly safe
hebenon—henbane
porches—entrances
distilment—distillation
blood—the blood
courses—flows swiftly
alleys—veins and arteries and other passages
sudden vigor—quick action
posset—cuddle
eager—sour, tart, sharp
tetter—scab
barked about—covered like the bark of a tree
lazar-like—leper-like
unhousel'd—without the sacraments or rites of the
church
disappointed—unprepared
unanel'd—without having received extreme unction
nature—natural affection
thorns—stings of conscience
matin—morning
'gins—begins
to pale—to make pale
unaffected—ineffectual
instant—instantly

globe—head
table—tablet
fond—trivial
saws—sayings
pressures—impressions
tables—memorandum book, note book
word—watchword
secure—protect
arrant—a knave through and through
circumstance—circumlocution
whirling—excited
for—as for
o'ermaster't as you may—get over it as you may
give—grant
sword—cross
true penny—honest fellow
in the cellarage—underground
hic et ubique—here and everywhere
work—burrow
pioneer—pioneer
wondrous—wondrously
put an antic disposition on—assume madne:
encumbered—folded
an if—and if
list—should please
giving out—strange sayings or actions
most—greatest
friending—friendliness
lack—be lacking
out of joint—bitterly disordered

Act II

Scene 1

Story

Polonius sends his servant, Reynaldo, to Laertes in Paris and commands him to find out what kind of a life his son is leading in that lively city. Next, Ophelia enters and excitedly tells her father that Hamlet, half-dressed, has paid her a visit and upset her. Polonius, wrongly concluding that Hamlet has gone mad over his love for Ophelia, decides to acquaint the King with this choice bit of gossip.

Analysis

The character sketch of Polonius drawn by himself is an excellent portrait of a suspicious, underhanded, spying old man. Perhaps the chief purpose of the scene is to produce suspense. Here, the reader meets the first manifestation of Hamlet's "antic disposition" after he had decided to feign madness. Knowing how subservient Polonius is to the King and feeling that Ophelia keeps no secrets from her father, Hamlet behaves strangely to her, being certain that she will relate all to Polonius, who in turn will carry the news to Claudius. As the King is Hamlet's objective, it is to make his uncle believe he is mad and not a desire to get rid of Ophelia, as some critics claim, that causes Hamlet's crazy outburst to the daughter of Polonius.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

ADVICE TO A SPY

Polonius—Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Reynaldo—I will, my lord.

Polonius—You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Reynaldo— My lord, I did intend it.

Polonius—Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, "I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him"; do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Reynaldo—Ay, very well, my lord.

Polonius—"And, in part, him; but," you may say, "not
well:

But if 't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so"; and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonor him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Reynaldo— As gaming, my lord.

Polonius—Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling:
You may go so far.

Reynaldo—My lord, that would dishonor him.

Polonius—'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so
quaintly

That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,

OPHELIA RELATES THE STRANGE ACTIONS OF HAMLET

Ophelia—My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;

Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;
 And with a look so piteous in purport
 As if he had been loosed out of hell
 To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

Polonius—Mad for thy love?

Ophelia— My lord, I do not know ;
 But truly I do fear it.

Polonius What said he?

Ophelia—He took me by the wrist and held me hard,
 Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
 And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
 He falls to such perusal of my face
 As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so ;
 At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
 He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound
 That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
 And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
 And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes ;
 For out o' doors he went without their help,
 And to the last bended their light on me.

Lines to be Memorized

POLONIUS CONTRASTS OLD AGE WITH YOUTH

Polonius—By heaven, it is as proper to our age
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
 As it is common for the younger sort
 To lack discretion.

Unusual Words and Phrases

marvellous—marvelously

marry—by Mary

inquire me—inquire for me

Danishers—Danes

encompassment and drift of question—scope and
 tendency or indirect means

particular demands—direct questions

take you—assume
in part—slightly
addicted—inclined to
put on him—accuse him of
rank—gross
wanton—wild
slips—small faults
season—represent
breathe—whisper
quaintly—ingeniously
taints—blemishes
liberty—free disposition
unreclaimed—untamed
breathe—describe
quaintly—subtly
unreclaimed—wild
drift—meaning
sullies—stains
soil'd—defiled
prenominate—forenamed
closes—concludes
in this consequence—as follows
addition—name
o'ertook in's rouse—intoxicated
reach—anticipation
windlasses—windings
assays of bias—indirect attempts
indirections—round-about ways
lecture—advice
have me—understand me
wi'—with

let him ply his music—let him follow his own bent
affrighted—terribly frightened
closet—private apartment
unbraced—unfastened
down-gyred—slipped down
purport—meaning
perusal—careful examination
as—as if
bulk—body
ecstasy—any state of unusual excitement
fordoes—destroys
hard words—harsh answers
repeal—send back
quoted—noted
wreck—ruin
jealousy—suspicion
proper—natural
sort—kind
known—revealed
which being kept close—Hamlet's action might cause
 more grief if it were hidden than the disclosure
 of his love for Ophelia would cause hatred
to hide—by hiding
to utter—by disclosing

Act II

Scene 2

Story

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two of Hamlet's school friends, who have been sent for by the King to pump Hamlet and to find out if possible the cause of his melancholy, are introduced. Promising to do the best they can, they leave the King as Polonius enters to announce the

return of the ambassadors from Norway and proclaim that he has discovered the secret of Hamlet's strange conduct. As soon as the ambassadors deliver to the King their report, Polonius announces to the King and Queen with pompous verbosity that Hamlet has been made mad by his love for Ophelia. The King, thinking of his own guilt, does not accept Polonius' deduction and feeling that something stronger than love is at the bottom of his stepson's distemper, wishes to examine the case further. At the suggestion of Polonius he agrees to hide himself where, with Polonius, he may listen to a conversation between Hamlet and Ophelia whom Polonius plans to bring together for that purpose.

When Polonius is alone, Hamlet enters reading, and, in his talk with the garrulous, old self-appointed mind-reader, he gives that worthy man the impression that he has lost his wits. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter as Polonius leaves and in their attempt to get Hamlet to talk about his ailment fail as did Polonius. In fact, Hamlet by skillful questions learns from them that the King has sent for them to quiz him. In their attempts to do so he not only baffles them completely but also sends them away conscious of being outwitted and at the same time thinking that he is mad. During the conversation Hamlet is informed that a company of tragedians has come to Elsinore and that he may expect some performances. In them, he sees a means to verify, through a play, the truth of what the ghost related regarding his father's death. At once, Hamlet decides to have these actors perform a tragedy in which he will insert some dozen or sixteen lines closely describing a scene like the murder of his father. The first player, agreeing to follow his patron's instructions,

leaves him, and Hamlet ends the scene with the famous Rogue-and-Peasant-slave soliloquy in which he reproaches himself for not wreaking vengeance on the King.

Analysis

The importance of this scene is that, though all through it Hamlet was pretending madness, yet his acts here give ample proof that his mind was perfectly sound. The rambling love-letter produced by Polonius, his poking fun at the old man, his baffling of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, the King's detectives, his use of such terms as "my uncle-father" and "my aunt-mother," his plan to enact the ghost's story of his father's murder before the very eyes of the murderer to observe its effect on him: all these are not the actions of a disordered brain.

Passage to be Memorized

HAMLET CONDEMNS HIS OWN INACTION

Hamlet—O! what a rogue and peasant slave am I:

Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba
That he should weep for her? What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appall the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? who does me this, ha?
'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: bloody, bloody villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a shrew, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!

Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
More relative than this: the play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

*Lines to be Studied to Understand the Characters of
Polonius, Ophelia and Hamlet*

Polonius—"To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia.—"

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; 'beautified' is a vile phrase; but you shall hear. Thus:

"In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.—"

Queen—Came this from Hamlet to her?

Polonius—Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

"Doubt thou the stars are fire;

Doubt that the sun doth move;

Doubt truth to be a liar;

But never doubt I love.

O dear Ophelia! I am ill at these numbers:

I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him,

HAMLET."

HAMLET REVERSES THE JUDGMENT OF DAVID

Hamlet—I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen molt no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Compare the foregoing with the Eighth Psalm.

Unusual Words and Phrases

moreover that—besides that
provoke—incite
sending—summons
nor—neither
of so young days—from childhood
sith—since
neighbored to his youth—associated with
humor—disposition
vouchsafe your rest—promise to stay
companies—presence
occasion—circumstances
aught—anything
open'd—found out
gentry—courtesy
expend—spend
visitation—stay
remembrance—token of gratitude
of us—over us
bent—inclination
bring—take
still—constantly
sure—surely
fruit—dessert
distemper—ill-health
doubt—suspect
main—the main reason
upon our first—at once
Polack—Pole
borne in hand—deluded
sends out arrests—he sends out order to halt
assay of arms—trial of arms
fee—reward

commission—reward
pass—passage
it likes us well—it pleases us well
at a more consider'd time—a time in which we are
not pressed with too much business
liege—lord
expostulate—discuss
soul of wit—essence of wisdom
go—pass
art—high-flown language
defective—a defect
perpend—consider
this—Ophelia's letter
gather—listen to me
beautified—endowed with beauty
doubt—suspect
machine—body
ill—unskillful
these numbers—lines of poetry
reckon—compute
is—belongs
more above—in addition
by—with
fain—gladly
my heart a-winking—winked at
look'd upon—encouraged
idle sight—foolish liking
round—straightforwardly
bespeak—address
star—position
precepts—lessons
resort—company
fruits—consequences

watch—wakefulness
lightness—madness
this from this—my head from my shoulders
centre—centre of the earth
I'll loose—I bring them together
arras—tapestry
mark the encounter—watch them when they meet
no assistant for a state—statesman
board—accost
carrion—dead matter
conception—understanding
far gone—up to his ears in love
between who—between whom
matter—the reading material
purging—expelling
hams—legs
honesty—right
should—would
pregnant—full of wit
happiness—good fortune
withal—with
indifferent—ordinary
button—tuft
Doomsday—Judgment-day
in particular—particularly
confines—places for criminals or lunatics
outstretched—ambitious
fay—faith
reason—argue with you
wait upon—attend
sort you—place you
attended—by sad thoughts
make you to—what brings you to

occasion—business
inclining—inclination
free visitation—a visit of his own accord
but to the purpose—say what you intend to say
color—soften
to what end—to what object
consonancy—brought up together
a better proposer—a better pleader
even—frank
direct—honest, straightforward
prevent—anticipate
discovery—disclosure
molt no feather—will not be revealed
forgone—abandoned
sterile—barren
brave—grand
fretted—adorned
faculty—mental power
express—exactly fitted to its purpose
paragon—pattern
quintessence—highest essence
Lenten—entertainment during Lent, therefore
 meagre, scant, small
coted—passed by
foil—sword
target—shield
gratis—free
humorous—capricious
tickled o' the sere—easily made to laugh
city—Copenhagen
chances—happens
inhibition—prohibition, restraint
late innovation—recent injunction

followed—popular
rusty—careless
aery—brook of an eagle or hawk
eyases—little eagles
top of question—top of their voices
tyranically clapped—loudly cheered
berattle—censure, howl down
stages—players
escoted—maintained, paid
pursue—follow
quality—calling
tarre—urge to fight
controversy—quarrel
argument—subject of the play
throwing about of brains—dispute
Do the boys carry it over?—are they successful?
Hercules and his load—a picture of Hercules bearing
the world on his shoulders was the sign of the
Globe Theatre. The allusion means that the
children have won all along the line
mows—grimaces
ducat—a coin worth a little over two dollars
in little—in miniature
appurtenance—that which belongs
comply—link arms
garb—fashion
extent—condescension
handsaw—heron
swaddling clouts—clothes
happily—perchance
right—rightly
buz, buz—state news
passing—very

row—verse

abridgment—cutting short

valanced—fringed with a beard

beard—to defy

nearer heaven—grown taller

altitude—thickness

chopine—a shoe with wooden soles generally worn
by women

cracked within the ring—a broken voice

straight—straightway

quality—expression

passionate—full of meaning

speak me—speak to me

caviare—a condiment not liked by the common
people

cried in the top of mine—were more valuable than
mine

modesty—simplicity

sallets—salads

indict—convict

Aeneas—hero of the Trojan war

Dido—Queen of Carthage

thereabout—that part

Pyrrhus—son of Achilles, a ruthless slayer of Tro-
jans at the Siege of Troy

Hyrcanian beast—the tiger

sable—black

ominous horse—the fatal wooden horse at the Siege
of Troy

gules—red

tricked—painted

impasted—covered with paste

tyrannous—pitiless

oe'r sized—smeared

coagulate—dried

gore—blood

anon—soon

rebellious to his arm—refusing to obey his arm

unequal—unequally matched

drives—strikes

fell—cruel

unnerved—feeble

senseless—inactive mind

his base—its base

takes prisoner—strikes on

declining—descending

milky head—white-haired

against—before

rack—clouds

orb below—earth

hush—quiet

region—sky

Cyclops—monsters who forged the armor of Gods
and heroes

proof eterne—forever impenetrable

remorse—pity

Synod—council

fellies—felloes

nave—hub of the wheel

Hecuba—wife to Priam, King of Troy

mobled—muffled up

threat'ning—to put out

bisson rheum—blinding tears

clout—a rag

for—in place of

o'er-teemed—exhausted

instant—immediate
milch—tearful
passion in—compassionate
turned—changed
speak out the rest—conclude
bestowed—lodged
used—treated
abstracts—summaries
chronicles—records
were better have—had better have
after his desert—according to his station
for a need—in an extreme case
wi'—with
peasant slave—a helpless bondsman
conceit—conception
wann'd—turned pale
function—faculty of action
cue—sign of prompting
general ear—public ear
free—innocent
amaze—confound
muddy-mettled—dull-brained
peak—mope
John-a-dreams—a sleepy fellow
unpregnant of my cause—a mind without any plan
of action
defeat—undoing
pate—head
tweaks—pulls, twists
take it—suffer it
pigeon liver'd—mild
lack gall—without courage
fatted—fattened

region kites—all the kites of this part of the country
offal—useless garbage
remorseless—pitiless
kindless—unnatural
want'n—wanton, a vixen
drab—a careless woman
scullion—a kitchen maid
about—begin to work
presently—immediately
malefactions—evil deeds
organ—instrument
tent—probe
blench—start
out of—by means of weakness
abuses—deceives
grounds—reasons
more relative—more conclusive
catch—snare

Act III

Scene 1

Story

The report to the King and Queen of the unsuccessful attempt of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz to extract from Hamlet reasons for his melancholy, Hamlet's invitation sent to the King and Queen to attend a play to be performed in the evening, the famous soliloquy of Hamlet on life and death, the meeting of Hamlet and Ophelia already planned by Polonius, the spying of Polonius and the King upon this interview, Hamlet's detection of the snare and his assumption of madness, the King's conclusion that Ophelia is not the cause of Hamlet's distraction, and that Hamlet's speech sounds not like madness, Claudius' fear of Hamlet and his decision to send

his troublesome step-son to England, Polonius' plan for an interview between Hamlet and his mother in which she is to upbraid her son, Polonius' stratagem to listen to this conversation and to report it to the King, and the King's agreement to send Hamlet to England if his mother learns nothing of his melancholy, are all set forth in Scene 1.

Analysis

Scene 1 contains ample proof of the sanity of Hamlet. With ease he tears the mask from his two hypocritical friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and instead of enlightening them, extracts from them the fact that they are spies of the King. His strategy in getting the King and Queen to witness a play which contains a scene similar to the murder of his father so that he can note the effect upon the King is surely not an emanation from a madman's brain. Nor is the famous soliloquy with its dread of the life after death and its contempt for the difficulties man encounters here to be considered the raving of a scatter-brain. Likewise, his treatment of Ophelia and her father is not the action of disordered mentality, but the true deduction of a sound mind whose owner scorns sycophants. Even Claudius, whose head is alert and versatile, after hearing Hamlet talk to Ophelia, testifies that what Hamlet spoke was not like madness, and his sudden decision to send the young man to England, after he had heard the interview between the lovers, shows that he feared Hamlet's mind more than his madness.

Passage to be Memorized

Hamlet—To be, or not to be,—that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune:
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep,—
No more;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—’tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish’d. To die;—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream;—ay, there’s the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there’s the respect,
That makes calamity of so long a life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law’s delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life;
But that the dread of something after death,—
The undiscover’d country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of!
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

Paraphrase of the Foregoing Quotation

To live or not to live is a question that sometime or other arises in the mind of every human being. Is it greater evidence of nobility of soul to endure poverty, sickness, oppression and disgrace or to end all troubles and sorrows by taking one’s own life? To die is to sleep. Death is nothing else but an everlasting sleep. If by sleep one could pass into a forgetfulness of the ills, ail-

ments and troubles of this life, then self-destruction would be man's greatest boon. But mankind has no proof that death is a dreamless sleep. After the soul has taken its mystic flight from the body, no one knows but that it may suffer agonies which would make the aches and pains it encountered here a paradise. This doubt as to what is beyond the grave explains why trials, troubles, sorrows and even disgrace are patiently endured. For if it were not for this uncertainty of what takes place in that realm from which no report has ever reached living mortals, self-destruction would be popular. Therefore, it is his ignorance of death that makes man bear his lot instead of changing it for something that may be worse. Reflecting thus, the majority of mankind prefer to let well enough alone and though many resolve to begin the great journey, a little consideration makes them drop the idea of rushing headlong on their last mysterious voyage.

Passage to be Studied

OPHELIA BELIEVES THAT HAMLET IS MAD

Ophelia—O! what a noble mind is here o'erthrown:
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,
sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy: O! woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Unusual Words and Phrases

drift of circumstance—indirect method

puts on—assumes

grating—disturbing

turbulent—upset

forward—willing

keeps aloof—holds at a distance

most like a gentleman—with courtesy

much forcing—strained manner

disposition—manner

niggard of question—unwilling to be questioned.

This phrase wholly misrepresents Hamlet's attitude in the interview

assay—lead him on

so fell—happened

o'er-raught—passed

beseech'd—requested

edge—urging

closely—secretly

affront—meet

lawful espials—lawful spies

bestow ourselves—hide ourselves

frankly—properly

wildness—madness

wonted—accustomed

on this book—in this book

color—excuse

your loneliness—being unattended

visage—appearance

rub—difficulty

coil—worry of life

contumely—insolence

spurns—insults

takes—puts up with
quietus make—end his life
bodkin—dagger
fardels—heavy loads, burdens
grunt—groan
bourn—boundary realm
native hue—natural color
thought—reflection
pith—height
moment—importance
lose the name of action—become sluggish and inactive
soft you—hush
orisons—prayers
many a day—considerable time
remembrances—keepsakes
aught—anything
honest—virtuous, chaste
commerce—intercourse, talking to
honesty—virtue
sometime—formerly
gives it proof—proves it
inoculate—graft
indifferent—indifferently
beck—call
arrant—absolute
but—except
wantonness—affectation
all but one—the King
expectancy—hope
rose—the chief ornament
deject—dejected
music—musical
sovereign—supreme

ecstasy—madness
on brood—brooding
disclose—revelation
to prevent—to anticipate
variable—various
something—somewhat
still—always
on't—of it
round—speak sharply
in the ear—within hearing
finds him not—finds not his secret

Act III

Scene 2

Story

This scene introduces the court play—a play selected by Hamlet which so closely resembled the details of his father's murder that the King, watching, is overcome by his guilt and quickly leaves the hall, fully aware that Hamlet knows who killed his father. The Queen, thoroughly upset, sends Guildenstern and Rosencrantz to Polonius to bring Hamlet to her.

Analysis

Hamlet's plot to verify the ghost's story proves a wonderful success. Immediately after the performance Horatio and Hamlet both pronounce the King guilty. But Hamlet, while he has gained the evidence of his uncle's guilt, has also put himself in a dangerous position. The King now knows that his step-son is not mad, and so plans to put him out of the way.

Passages to be Memorized

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACTORS

Hamlet—Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth

it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

First Player—I warrant your honor.

Hamlet—Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

First Player—I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

Hamlet—O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators

to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

Hamlet—

Nay, do not think I flatter;

For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be
flatter'd?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

HAMLET'S SOLILOQUY AT MIDNIGHT

Hamlet—'Tis now the very witching time of night,
 When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
 Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
 And do such bitter business as the day
 Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
 O heart! lose not thy nature; let not ever
 The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
 Let me be cruel, not unnatural;
 I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
 How in my words soever she be shent,
 To give them seals never, my soul, consent!

Unusual Words and Phrases

mouth it—use high-flown language

your—well-known

had as lief—had as soon

temperance—moderation

robustious—blustering

periwig-pated—wearing a wig

groundlings—spectators in the pit

are capable of—are able to appreciate

modesty—moderation

from—contrary

end—object

image—likeness

pressure—character, stamp

come tardy off—done poorly

unskillful—inexperienced, untrained

censure—judgment

allowance—acknowledgment

gait—walk

journeyemen—laborers not yet masters of their tools

barren—without wit

presently—immediately
cop'd withal—come in contact with
advancement—preferment
candied tongue—flattering tongue
crook—bend
pregnant—easily inclined
thrift—profit
suffering—bearing cheerfully
blood—passion
judgment—reason
seeming—conduct
whilst—time
scape—escape
theft—what is stolen
idle—play a foolish part, act mad
of the chameleon's dish—on air
nothing—no information
stay upon—await
within these two hours—less than two hours ago
by 'r lady—by our lady
not thinking on—oblivion
miching mallecho—secret insidious mischief
belike—perhaps
show—dumb show
argument—theme
keep counsel—keep a secret
posy—a poetical verse
Phoebus' cart—chariot of the sun
salt wash—the sea
distrust—am solicitous about
nothing—in no way
love is sized—the size of my love
littlest—last

operant—active

leave—cease

live behind—live longer than I

instances—motives

respects of thrift—thoughts of gain

validity—strength

most necessary—unavoidable

debt—due

enactures—resolutions

aye—ever

try—tests

seasons—ripens

anchor's cheer—hermit's room

blanks—makes pale

scope—object

opposite—obstacle

fain—gladly

argument—plot of the play

tropically—figuratively

free souls—innocent souls

galled jade—a horse with a sore back

withers—shoulders

unwrung—sound

leave thy damnable faces—stop looking around

extant—true

the stricken deer—Claudius

hart ungalled—Hamlet

watch—guard

turn Turk—change completely

razed—slashed

a fellowship in a cry of players—a partnership in a
company of players

Damon—Hamlet pays Horatio the compliment of

being the noblest friend a man can have. See
story of Damon and Pythias
dismantled—deprived
of Jove himself—Hamlet's father
pajock—Claudius
recorders—flutes
perdy—for "par Dieu," French for "by God"
distempered—out of sorts, disordered
choler—anger
more richer—used as a double comparative
frame—order
wholesome—sensible
amazement—disturbance
admiration—astonishment
sequel—consequence
closet—private room
trade—business
pickers and stealers—hands
voice—support
musty—stale
pipe—flute
ventages—air holes
organ—instrument
fret me—annoy me
fool me—indulge me
top—height
bent—inclination
the witching time of night—midnight
yawn—open wide
contagion—pestilence
bitter business—deeds of bitter cruelty
nature—natural affection
Nero—Roman emperor who had his mother assassinated

daggers—bitter words
shent—reproached
to give them seals—fulfill

Act III

Scene 3

Story

The King has an audience with Guildenstern and Rosencrantz in which he tells them to prepare to take Hamlet to England as he does not like a madman so near him as is his stepson. As they leave the King, Polonius enters and reports that Hamlet is going to his mother's room, that he will act as spy behind the arras and report what he learns to him before the latter retires. Alone, the King utters his famous prayer soliloquy which Hamlet, on his way to interview his mother, hears; and with difficulty refrains from killing his father's murderer.

Analysis

In this scene there is a remarkable picture of the King's duplicity. He sends Hamlet in charge of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz to England with sealed orders (as we learn later) to be put to death. In almost the next breath, while his mind is contemplating the death of the son he asks heaven to forgive his murder of the father. One does not wonder then at his final exclamation,

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

Hamlet's speech in this scene is the only one of his utterances in the whole play in which he asks not only vengeance but also that Claudius be eternally damned.

The ghost has told him that his father's soul had been consigned to Purgatory—a place preparatory for Heaven. Has not Hamlet's character here, then, a touch of the hardness of Shylock when he plans not only to kill Claudius but also to send his soul to languish forever in the infernal regions?

Passages to be Studied

THOUGHTS OF A GUILTY KING

King—O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my term? "Forgive me my foul murder"?
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?

Try what repentance can: what can it not?
 Yet what can it when one can not repent?
 O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
 O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
 Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!
 Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
 All may be well.

HAMLET REFLECTS UPON KILLING THE KING

Hamlet—Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
 And now I'll do 't. And so he goes to heaven;
 And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd:
 A villain kills my father; and for that,
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send
 To heaven.
 O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
 He took my father grossly, full of bread;
 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
 And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
 But in our circumstance and course of thought,
 'Tis heavy with him: and am I then revenged,
 To take him in the purging of his soul,
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
 No!
 Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
 When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act
 That has no relish of salvation in 't;
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

Unusual Words and Phrases

terms of our estate—position to think

provide—get ready

noyance—annoyance

cease of majesty—decease of majesty

gulf—whirlpool
massy—massive
arm you—prepare for
speedy—at once
free-footed—unrestrained
process—account
of vantage—from advantage
intent—intention
in pause—hesitation
what if—suppose
whereto serves—what difference does it make
forestalled—anticipated
effects—advantages
retain the offence—retain what was gained by the
 offence
the wicked prize—his advancement through murder
limed soul—captured soul
engaged—bound
assay—attempt
now—while
scanned—looked into
flush—full blown
audit—final account
heavy—a heavy debt
seasoned—prepared
passage—the flight to the next world
hent—opportunity

Act III

Scene 4

Story

In a stormy interview with his mother, after she rebukes him for putting on a play to offend the King,

Hamlet throws off his cloak of madness, bitterly pictures her calloused soul, makes her promise to repent and wrings from her another promise that she will not reveal to the King that his madness is only a mask. Hamlet turns his mother's soul inside out and moves her so that she cries for help. Behind the arras, Polonius, true to his promise to report their conversation to the King, echoes the cries of the Queen. Thinking Polonius is the King, Hamlet runs his rapier through the tapestry and instantly kills the King's faithful spy.

Analysis

The plan of the King, Queen and Polonius to bring Hamlet to his senses through a motherly lecture from the Queen proved a boomerang for Polonius and the Queen. The death of Polonius is the first step in the resolution, and the Queen's lecture instead of torturing Hamlet turns into a burning blister for herself with Hamlet's tongue administering it.

Passage to be Studied

A FRIVOLOUS MOTHER

Queen—What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Hamlet—

Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty ;

Calls virtue hyprocite ; takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And sets a blister there ; makes marriage vows

As false as dicers' oaths : O, such a deed

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul ; and sweet religion makes

A rhapsody of words : heaven's face doth glow ;

With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen— Ah me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

Hamlet—Look here, upon this picture, and on this
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows.

Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else, could you not have motion; but, sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't,
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen—O Hamlet, speak no more:

Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots,
As will not leave their tinct.

HAMLET PROVES HE IS NOT MAD

Hamlet—Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass but my madness speaks;
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds
To make them ranker. Forgive me this virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

HAMLET FORESHADOWS THE END OF GUILDENSTERN AND
ROSENCRAZ

Hamlet—[There's letters seal'd; and my two school-fellows,

Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar: and it shall go hard
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O! 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.]
This man shall set me packing;
I'll lug the guts into the neighbor room.
Mother, good-night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,

Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good-night, mother.

Unusual Words and Phrases

straight—at once
lay home—talk plain
broad—free
heat—anger
round—frank
idle—foolish
rood—cross of the church
budge—stir
glass—mirror
rat—spy
thy better—the King
too busy—prying
some danger—dangerous
leave—cease
braz'd—hardened
proof and bulwark—impenetrable de
sense—feeling
dicers—gamblers
contraction—marriage agreement
rhapsody of words—meaningless words
glow—blush
this solidity and compound mass—the earth
doom—doomsday
act—deed
index—preface
counterfeit—presentiment
Hyperion—the sun-god
Mars—the God of War
station—attitude

Mercury—messenger of the gods
new-lighted—recently set on
heaven-kissing—lofty
wholesome—healthy
leave to feed—stop feeding
batten—grow fat on
hey-day—passion
motion—feeling, emotion
apoplex'd—atrophied
ecstasy—madness
quantity of choice—power to choose
cozen'd—cheated
hoodman-blind—blind-man's bluff
sans—without
mope—act without plan or purpose
mutine—mutiny
charge—command
panders—ministers to the gratification
grained—ingrained
tinct—dye colors
tithe—one-tenth
precedent—former
vice—clown
cutpurse—pick-pocket
a king of shreds and patches—a king without dignity
tardy—inactive
important acting—necessary
visitation—visit
whet—sharpen
amazement—perturbation
conceit—imagination
incorporal—without substance
bedded—lying flat

excrements—outgrowth
distemper—disorder
capable—capable of emotion
portal—door
re-word—repeat exactly
gambol—skip away
infects unseen—festers
what is to come—new sins
compost—fertilizer
ranker—worse than they are
pursy—corpulent
curb and woo—bow and beg
leave—permission
minister—servant
bestow—place him
answer—account
bloat—bloated
ravel—disentangle
good—well
paddock—toad
gib—tom-cat
concernings—concerns
unpeg—loosen
conclusions—the result
concluded on—decided
marshal—lead
sport—policy
petar—mortar
delve—dig
at the moon—to the moon
prating—chattering
to draw toward an end—to conclude

Act IV

Scene 1

Story

The Queen reports the death of Polonius to the King, but, loyal to her son, she pretends that Hamlet did the act in a fit of madness. When the King hears of Hamlet's crime, fearing Hamlet, he calls Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and orders them to find Polonius' body and to bring it into the chapel. Next he plans to avoid slander falling on him by telling his wisest friends what Hamlet has done and what he intends to do with that madman.

Analysis

The scene shows that Claudius intends to destroy Hamlet. When he hears of the death of his faithful eavesdropper, he does not even shed a tear for poor old Polonius but selfishly remarks: "It might have been so with us, had we been there." He now has an excuse to send Hamlet away and so he tells the Queen that at sunrise Hamlet will be sent to England according to the scheme outlined in Act III, Scene 3.

Unusual Words and Phrases

translate—tell what they mean

bestow this place on us a little while—let us alone
for a short time

brainish apprehension—imaginary fear

heavy—sad

liberty—free to do as he wishes

threats—dangers

providence—looking ahead

short—controlled

divulging—disclosing

pith of life—vital parts
draw apart—take out of the way
vile deed—the killing of Polonius
countenance—uphold
aid—with help of others
fair—softly
call up—seek counsel of
untimely—unfortunately
level—straight
his blank—its mark
woundless—not vulnerable

Act IV

Scene 2

Story

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find Hamlet and ask what he has done with the body. Instead of answering them he calls Rosencrantz a sponge and the King a thing of no value.

Analysis

The scene, except for its relief from the murder of Polonius and the talk of the murder and the part it plays in ridiculing two such humbugs as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, is of little use.

Unusual Words and Phrases

stowed—placed
compounded—mingled
counsel—secret
demanding of—questioned by
replication—reply
countenance—favor
authorities—officers of authority

Act IV

Scene 3

Story

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, unable to learn anything about the body of Polonius, bring Hamlet before the King who, under the mask of anxiety for his safety, tells him that to avoid the consequences of his act he must at once go to England.

Analysis

The scene advances the plans of the King and explains his perfidy. Under the guise of friendship, he sends his step-son to England with sealed letters ordering his death.

The second purpose of the scene is to foreshadow the miscarriage of the King's plans and the escape of Hamlet. All through the conversation, feigning madness, Hamlet expresses his contempt for the King and although he reads Claudius' thoughts correctly, utters surprise when the King tells him he must go to England. Here again, if additional proof of Hamlet's sanity were needed, it can be found in the colloquy where Hamlet cleverly laughs at all the schemes of the villain King without the latter's even suspecting that he is familiar with them.

Passages to be Studied

THE KING PLANS THE MURDER OF HAMLET

King—And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,—thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,

And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

Unusual Words and Phrases

loose—free
distracted—senseless
deliberate pause—a plan of action
bestowed away—hidden
convocation—assembly
fat—fatten
variable—various
eat—eaten
the other place—hell
nose—smell
tender—regard as valuable
with fiery quickness—in hot haste
at help—favorable
associates tend—companions are ready
at foot—right on his heels
leans—is related to
at aught—of any consideration
cicatrice—wound
free—without constraint
coldly set—disregard
process—plan of actions
present death—immediate death
hectic—fever
howe'er my haps—whatever happens

Act IV

Scene 4

Story

Fortinbras, nephew of the Norwegian King, marches through Denmark by permission to attack Poland. Ham-

let interviews one of the Norwegian captains and learns that Fortinbras' quarrel with Poland is over nothing. Hamlet, alone, contrasts his own inaction with the forceful movements of Fortinbras and resolves to spur on his revengeful thoughts.

Analysis

Outside of the chance it gives Hamlet to admire Fortinbras' warlike action and so explain his vote in favor of Fortinbras as King in the last scene of the last act, Scene 4 is of small importance; and unless the reader interprets Hamlet's speech to his mother, Act III, Scene 4,

But I will delve one yard below their mines
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet
When in one line two crafts directly meet.

as a plan to escape from Guildenstern and Rosencrantz and then return to Norway to kill Claudius, his soliloquy is worthless.

Passage to be Memorized

THE PROCRASTINATING HAMLET

Hamlet—How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wis-
dom
And ever three parts coward, I do not know
Why yet I live to say "This thing's to do";
Sith I have cause and will and strength and means

To do 't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
 Witness this army of such mass and charge
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
 Makes mouths at the invisible event,
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure
 To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
 Is not to stir without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
 When honor's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
 And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough and continent
 To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

Unusual Words and Phrases

license—permission

conveyance—right to march through

eye—presence

softly—slowly

powers—soldiers

addition—exaggeration

ranker rate—higher income

in fee—granted absolutely

debate—settle

imposthume—abscess

straight—immediately

fust—to turn mouldy

craven—full of fear

sith—since

gross—large
mass—numbers
charge—expense
puff'd—bragging
makes mouth—mocks
invisible—unexpected
unsure—shaky
egg-shell—trifle
argument—dispute
stain'd—dishonored
imminent—near
fantasy and trick of fame—an imaginary excuse
plot—ground
continent—that which contains

Act IV

Scene 5

Story

Horatio with Ophelia, who has become insane over the death of her father and the loss of her lover appears before the Queen. Laertes returns, leads a mob, storms the castle and demands vengeance from the King for the murder of his father. The King manages to soften Laertes and then promises to clear himself of having anything to do with the murder of Polonius.

Analysis

Scene 5 is well known for its famous portrait of a disordered mind and for its excellent picture of the redeeming qualities of Claudius. There is nothing more pathetic in all literature than the ravings of Ophelia, strewing flowers and singing nursery rhymes. In this scene, too, one meets that wonderful far-seeing eye of

the poet, who, no matter how black he paints a character, can nevertheless see something good in him. Before he appears in Scene 4 Claudius has not shown any likeable qualities. In this scene, however, he looms large. He does not fear the threatening Laertes, nor the violence of the mob and turns Polonius' warlike son into a harmless bragging boy.

Passages to be Studied

THE WORRIES OF A KING

King— O Gertrude, Gertrude!
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick, and unwholesome in their thoughts and
whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but
greenly,
In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts;
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France;
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude! this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death.

DIVINITY GUARDS A KING

King—What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,

That treason can but peep to what it would,
 Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
 Why thou art thus incens'd.—

Unusual Words and Phrases

distract—distracted

spurns—kicks

enviously—spitefully

unshaped—artless

collection—inference

aim at it—guess at it

botch—bungle

yield them—bring her words forth

toy—trifle

prologue—prelude

amiss—calamity

artless jealousy—ignorant suspicion

majesty—the Queen

know—distinguish

cockle hat—pilgrim's hat

shoon—shoe

shroud—winding sheet

larded—dressed

God 'ield you—God reward you

owl was a baker's daughter—refers to the story that Christ visited a baker's shop and asked for a piece of bread. The baker's daughter scolded her father for giving such a large piece and was at once turned into an owl.

conceit—contemplating

betime—early

cannot choose but weep—cannot stop weeping

close—closely

give her good watch—guard her carefully

remove—removal
muddied—confused
greenly—foolishly
hugger-mugger—secretly
fair judgment—reason
much containing—important
in clouds—invisible
buzzers—tale-bearers
our person to arraign—to accuse me
in ear and ear—to everybody
murthering-piece—small cannon
superfluous death—more death than one
Switzers—Swiss guards
overpeering of his list—rising over his boundary
riotous head—hostile advance
word—proposal
counter—an opposite or false trial
keep the door—guard the door
hedge—guard
thoroughly—thoroughly
writ—written
ope—open
life-rendering—giving up his own life
good child—dutiful son
sensibly—feelingly
level—directly
sense—feeling
virtue—power to see
fine—pure
instance—sample
bare-faced—uncovered face
matter—senseless
document—lesson

fennel—a flower, the emblem of flattery
columbine—a flower, the emblem of ingratitude
rue—a flower, the emblem of repentance
daisy—a flower, the emblem of dissemblers
violets—flowers, the emblem of faithfulness
thought—anxiety
passion—suffering
favor—grace
poll—head
commune with—share in
me right—my right
collateral hand—indirectly
touch'd—implicated
hatchment—escutcheon
ostentation—show
call 't in question—demand an inquiry

Act IV

Scene 6

Story

Horatio receives a letter from Hamlet delivered by sailors stating that his messengers had letters for the King, that Horatio should show them how to reach Claudius, that he had been captured by pirates, that the pirates had treated him kindly, that he wishes Horatio to come to him, that he has words for him which will make him dumb and that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course to England.

Analysis

Hamlet has frustrated Claudius' plans and is again in Denmark. The scene advances the plot by bringing Hamlet back to carry out his original scheme of vengeance.

Passage to be Studied

HAMLET, THE MAN OF ACTION

Horatio—[*Reading*] “Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very war-like appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valor; in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosen-crantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine,

HAMLET.”

Unusual Words and Phrases

what are they—what kind of men are they?

greeted—saluted

an't—if it

let to know—told

overlooked—perused carefully

means—ready access

appointment—equipment

of mercy—merciful

speedier—more speedily

Act IV

Scene 7

Story

In his talk with Laertes the King soon changes Laertes' anger towards himself to Hamlet by putting the blame of Polonius' death upon the latter. The King further suggests in the lines

You shortly shall hear more ;
I loved your father, and we love ourself,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

that he has had Hamlet killed. While he is busily engaged in quieting Laertes, Hamlet's messengers arrive with a letter which crushes the hopes of the King. The mis-sive announces that Hamlet has been captured by pirates, that he has been set naked on shore and that he will tell the King more as soon as he sees him. Immediately, the King and Laertes devise a new plot to kill Hamlet. Hamlet is to be persuaded to engage in a fencing match with Laertes, who, during a pause in the combat is to take up a foil that has no button on its point and with it to stab Hamlet. To make the King's step-son's death certain, Laertes agrees to poison the point of this foil while the King, on the other hand, agrees to have at hand a cup of poisoned wine of which Hamlet between the heats is to be induced to drink. Just as this vile compact is concluded the Queen brings the news that Ophelia in her madness has accidentally drowned herself.

Analysis

Scene 7 is a remarkable piece of verisimilitude. In Act II, Scene 1, there is a sketch of Laertes drawn by Polonius, his father. In that portrait Polonius does not expect much of his son. In Act IV, Scene 1, Laertes lives up to all his father's gloomy expectations. Claudius,

likewise, though he is the strongest character in the play next to Hamlet, up to this scene has been dark and treacherous and in the part of the arch-conspirator here, he even surpasses his former reputation. Hamlet also acts true to form and, contrasted with the treachery, perfidy and murder of Claudius and Laertes, shines as the real hero of the drama.

Passages to be Studied for Characterization

VILLAINOUS CONSPIRACY

King—No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you in fine together,
And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.

Laertes— I will do't:
And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King— Let's further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assay'd: therefore this project

Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
 If this should blast in proof. Soft! let me see;
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings.
 I ha't:
 When in your motion you are hot and dry,—
 As make your bouts more violent to that end,—
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him
 A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
 Our purpose may hold there.—

Unusual Words and Phrases

acquittance—acquittal

sith—since

knowing—intelligent

-vell—clearly

eats—acts

rimeful—criminal

apital—punishable by death

nuch unsinewed—without strength

y his looks—at the sight of him

conjunctive—closely united

sphere—orbit

count—account

general gender—the common people

gyves—fetters, leg-irons

arrows—schemes

reverted—turned back

shook—shaken

naked—without money or resources

should—can possibly

abuse—trick

character—handwriting

lost—perplexed

ruled—guided

ripe—matured
device—scheme
cannot choose but fall—cannot help falling
wind of blame—breath of scandal
uncharge the practice—bring no charge of under-
handed work
organ—instrument
quality—accomplishment
regard—opinion
siege—seat or rank
livery—dress
weeds—robes
importing—denoting
incorps'd—incorporate
so far he topped—surpassed
forgery—imagination
scrimers—fencers
motion—thrust
envy—jealousy of him
still—always
plurisy—redundancy of blood
quick o' the ulcer—
sanctuarize—protect
put on—instigate
in fine—in short
remiss—careless
peruse—examine carefully
unbated—unblunted
pass of practice—treacherous thrust
unction—a salve
mountebank—quack
mortal—deadly
cataplasm—plaster

simples—medicinal herbs
contagion—poison
gall—scratch
drift—intention
look—appear
assay'd—attempt
a back—backer
blast—burst
proof—testing
cunnings—skill
dry—thirsty
nonce—occasion
stuck—thirst in fencing
aslant—leaning over
long purples—purple orchid
liberal—licentious
incapable—unable to feel
trick—particular custom
douts it—puts it out
give it start—set it in motion

Act V

Scene 1

Story

Two clowns in a churchyard digging Ophelia's grave are questioned by Hamlet who, passing with Horatio, hears them singing at their melancholy work. Next, Ophelia's body, mourned by Laertes, King and Queen and mourners, is brought for burial. An altercation takes place between Laertes and the officiating priest over the funeral ceremony of a suicide. A fight then follows between Laertes and Hamlet.

Analysis

The saying

A little nonsense now and then
Is relished by the wisest men

appears to be the main reason for this scene. Hearing nothing but plots and counterplots, one is relaxed by such remarks as flow from the clowns and Hamlet, even when their witticisms are about jaw-bones and the skulls of the dead. Then, too, it avoids a satiety of sadness for the following scene is one hundred per cent. tragic with its four violent deaths.

Incidentally, this scene is informative. In the first place, it states that Hamlet was thirty years old on the day that Ophelia was buried. Next it points out how Shakespeare disliked painted women. Then, it contains absolute evidence that Hamlet once loved Ophelia. Lastly, it takes particular pains to state how careful the Elizabethans were about selecting the burial places of their relatives.

Passage to be Studied

HAMLET REFLECTS ON THE CHANGES MADE BY DEATH

Hamlet—Alas! poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Unusual Words and Phrases

- salvation*—in clown language means destruction
straight—immediate
crowner—coroner
sat on her—passed on her
se offendendo—for *se defendo*, self-defense, used to excite laughter. It is in itself comic to hear a clown try to quote Latin
branches—divisions
argal—ergo, therefore
delver—digger
quest—inquest
say'st—to the point
countenance—approval
even Christian—fellow Christian
bore arms—a quibble on the coat of arms. Adam's coat of arms was the spade
tenants—occupants
mass—by the mass
Yaughan—supposed to be the name of an English inn-keeper
stoup—tankard
meet—suitable
daintier—more delicate
intil—into
jowls—knocks
politician—schemer
chapless—jawless
mazzard—head
fine revolution—wonderful change
trick—skill
play at loggats—a game in which thick sticks are

thrown to lie as near as possible to a stake fixed
in the ground or to a block of wood on the floor
quiddits—equivocations
quilllets—nice points
sconce—head
battery—for assault
fine—end
indentures—mutual agreement
inheritor—possessor
on't—of it
quick—living
quick lie—a lively lie
absolute—particular
by the card—carefully
equivocation—double meaning
picked—precise
galls—rubs
kibe—chilblain
upon what ground—for what cause
Rhenish—Rhenish wine
Yorick's—George's
infinite jest—endless wit
gorge—to vomit
gibes—sharp wit
quite chop-fallen—wasted away
favor—looks
Alexander—Alexander the Great who conquered the
world
i' the earth—when buried
with modesty enough—without exaggeration
flaw—gust of wind
maimed rites—irregular, not the usual ones
fordo—destroy

cstate—rank
couch—step aside, keep out of sight
obsequies—funeral rites
warrentise—permission
unsanctified—unconsecrated
shards—fragments of pottery
crants—garlands
requiem—hymn of peace
peace-parted—departed in peace
most ingenius sense—intellect
flat—level
what is he?—what kind of a man is he?
conjures—invokes
wandering stars—planets
wonder-wounded—struck with wonder
splenitive—easily angered
theme—subject
wag—move
'swounds—by God's wounds
woo't—wouldst thou
eisel—vinegar
outface—browbeat
quick—alive
prate—rant
mere—absolute
her golden couplets—her young
disclosed—produced
present push—immediate test

Act V

Scene 2

Story

In a private interview with Horatio Hamlet tells him how upset he was on the second night at sea, how his

fighting spirit arose, how indiscretion drove him to steal the packet of the spies when he thought the pirate ship had failed him, how he changed the sealed commission so that Guildenstern and Rosencrantz on reaching England would be beheaded instead of himself, how his ability to write a legible hand aided him to forge the document, how his father's seal, the model of Claudius, assisted his plot, how in the sea fight of the next day he was saved as he had written in his letter, why he concludes to murder the King without further delay and why he is sorry for his encounter in the grave with Laertes.

Horatio and Hamlet are interrupted by Osric, a messenger from the King, who tells Hamlet that Claudius will, if Hamlet permit, arrange an immediate contest with swords between his step-son and Laertes. Hamlet accepts and the contest is staged at once.

In the match which is in the presence of the Court, Laertes wounds Hamlet with his poisoned rapier, but in the fight Hamlet manages to exchange his sword for his opponent's and with it wounds Laertes. While the contest is progressing, the Queen, who knows nothing of the wine being poisoned for Hamlet, drinks some of it and falls dead. Laertes, knowing he is going to die, then confesses to Hamlet the plot of which he and the King have been guilty, and Hamlet instantly stabs the King to death. Laertes and Hamlet die soon after. Horatio explains the cause of the murders; and the play ends with the election of Fortinbras as King.

Analysis

Some of the questions suggested by this interesting scene are as follows:

1. Is the attack of the pirate ship an accident or is it

the result of Hamlet's counterplot to delve one yard below their mines and blow them to the moon?

2. Where were Guildenstern and Rosencrantz when this supposed madman in their charge was rifling their cabin?

3. Was Hamlet's prayer for the instant death of these two spies, murder?

4. Why is Hamlet so eager to kill Claudius after his return from the pirate ship?

5. What is Hamlet's idea of a ruling Providence?

6. What is the dramatic objection to introducing a character like Osric into the last scene of the play?

7. If Hamlet was not mad, how does his apology to Laertes before the contest square with his hatred of humbug, his love of frankness and truth?

8. What new characteristic does the King's toast to Hamlet show?

9. What does Hamlet's refusal to drink the wine offered him by the King indicate?

10. If you were in the same position Hamlet was, would you have murdered Claudius after the visit of the ghost, at the close of the players' play or after your return from the pirate ship?

Passages to be Studied

HAMLET BECOMES A FATALIST

Hamlet—Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,—
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall; and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,—

HAMLET, AT SEA, GETS VALUABLE PROOF AGAINST CLAUDIUS

Hamlet—Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them: had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,—
O royal knavery!—an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

HAMLET WRITES A NEW COMMISSION

Hamlet—Being thus be-netted round with villainies,—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains
They had begun the play,—I sat me down,
Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair;
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair and labor'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

HAMLET IN SELF-DEFENSE SENDS THE SPIES TO
THEIR DOOM

Hamlet—An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm should flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like as 's of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

HAMLET NO LONGER A PROCRASTINATOR

Hamlet—Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon—
 He that hath kill'd my king, and stain'd my mother,
 Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
 Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
 And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience,
 To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
 To let this canker of our nature come
 In further evil?

A LIVELY TOAST

King— Give me the cups,
 And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
 The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
 The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
 "Now the king drinks to Hamlet."

HAMLET KILLS CLAUDIUS

Hamlet—Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
 Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
 Follow my mother. [*King dies.*]

HORATIO, A TRUE FRIEND

Horatio— Never believe it:
 I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
 Here's yet some liquor left.

Hamlet— As thou'rt a man,
 Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I'll have't.
 O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
 Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
 If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
 Absent thee from felicity awhile,
 And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
 To tell my story.

Unusual Words and Phrases

circumstance—conditions

fighting—struggle

mutines—revolters

bilboes—stocks
rashly—without reflection
rashness—impulse
do pall—fail
scarf'd about—carelessly worn
groped—advanced by feeling one's way
finger'd—found
room—cabin
larded—dotted with
importing—regarding
such bugs—such bugbears
supervise—perusal
leisure bated—at once
not to stay—not to wait for
be-netted—surrounded by enemies
they—his brains
fair—legibly
statists—statesmen
baseness—low breeding
yeoman's service—faithful service
effect—purport
earnest conjuration—solemn appeal
amities—friendships
as's of great charge—great burdens
view and knowing—reading and knowledge
debatement—debate
sudden—instant
ordinant—ordaining
model—counterpart
writ—document
subscribed—signed
gave't the impression—sealed
sequent—subsequent

go to't—go to their death
are not near—do not trouble my conscience
their defeat—their execution
by their own insinuation—by their own act
pass—thrust
fell points—deadly points
opposites—adversaries
does it not,—stand me now upon—is it not right for
me to do the deed?
angle for my proper life—seek my life
cozenage—trickery
to quit him—to kill Claudius
issue—result
interim—intervening time
image—reflection
favours—good will
bravery—bragging
crib—manger
mess—table
chough—chattering crow
dirt—land
bonnet—cap
indifferent—moderately
complexion—constitution
absolute—perfect
differences—distinctions
soft—gentle
great showing—fine manners
card or calendar of gentry—the leader of fashion
continent—embodiment
definement—definition
perdition—harm
inventorially—into many parts

jaw—to fall behind
dearth—scarcity
rareness—unusual or scarce quality
diction—description
semblance—likeness
umbrage—shadow
concernancy—connection
it would not much approve me—it would not do me
much credit
imputation—repute
meed—merit
unfellowed—a nonpareil
imponed—staked
poniards—daggers
assigns—appendages
hangers—part of a sword belt
liberal conceit—elaborate design
germane—akin
laid—wagered
vouchsafe—grant
answer—acceptance
breathing time—time for exercise
re-deliver—report
for's—for his
drossy—worthless
yesty—frothy
fond—foolish
winnowed—sifted
attend—await
that—if
able—fit for the fight
in happy time—at the right time
use some gentle entertainment—greet him friendly •

foolery—a silly feeling
gain-giving—misgiving
forestall—anticipate
repair—approval
fit—ready
let be—no matter
pardon't—pardon it
this presence—these present
punish'd—afflicted
exception—objection
disclaiming from—disavows
a purpos'd evil—intentional injury
free—acquit
o'er the house—at random
in nature—personally
reconcilement—reconciliation
name—honor
ungor'd—unsullied
embrace it freely—argue to your terms
likes me well—pleases me
all a length—all one length
stoups—tankards
ordnance—cannon
union—pearl
kettle—kettledrum
wary eye—watchful eye
palpable—certain
napkin—handkerchief
carouses to thy fortune—drinks good luck to thee
dally—trifle
wanton—sport of
springe—trap
unbated—sharp

unvenom'd—poisoned
temper'd—compounded
free—guiltless
chance—event
fell sergeant—cruel sheriff's officer
antique—ancient
absent thee from felicity awhile—do not enter heaven
yet
gives this warlike volley—salute
o'ercrows—confounds
lights—falls on
voice—vote
occurents—events
solicited—aroused me
toward—near
at a shot—with one shot
jump—just
stage—platform
put on—brought about
upshot—issue
inventors—plotters
deliver—narrate
vantage—advantage
draw on more—influence more people
put on—proved
rites—ceremonies due a soldier

MILTON'S L'ALLEGRO ANALYZED

MILTON'S L'ALLEGRO ANALYZED

Teachers often ask why *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso* and *Comus* are studied in a high school course. They claim that the poems are too difficult, too dry, too vague, too suggestive to appeal to pupils preparing for college and that they should be taken up later at the university. Lovers of Milton, on the other hand, are ready with a hundred reasons in favor of the study of these gems and as the author agrees with them, he will briefly state why he likes to introduce his pupils to Milton's famous lyrics.

No matter where a student goes nature is with him. Happy indeed is that boy who early learns to see beauty in sunrise, woodlands, mountains, meadows, groves and in the colored curtains of an evening sky at the close of a summer's day, who can feel awe and rapture in a violent gale, on the billowy sea, before a leaping waterfall or in a raging typhoon. In *L'Allegro*, Milton shows the pleasures a cheerful man may get out of a day in July or August. He first introduces the out-door pleasures of a perfect morning. Next, he pictures the scenes of mid-day. Later he enumerates the pleasures of early evening and finally catalogues some of the entertainments of midnight. *Il Penseroso* and also *Comus* contain many passages representing nature in her various forms which can please the most fastidious.

All three of these poems are rich in classical, pastoral and literary allusions. Every pupil ought to know the stories suggested by such names as Venus, Bacchus, Hymen, Orpheus, Circe and Pluto. Corydon, Thyrsis and Phyllis in their musical and pastoral accomplishments are surely worthy of every student's acquaintance. Nor are Jonson and Shakespeare names which should sound strange to the ears of an undergraduate.

The minor poems help students understand Milton, the hater of tyrants, Milton, the lover of chastity, and Milton, the champion of liberty. There are passages scattered through these lyrics which paint the poet not as a narrow-minded Puritan but as a great national leader who penned such burning thoughts as:

"War has made many great whom peace makes small."

"He who entrenches on the liberty of others is the first to lose his own and become a slave."

"Know that to be free is the same thing as to be pious, to be wise, to be temperate and just, to be frugal and abstinent, and lastly to be magnanimous and brave."

"We are entirely free by nature and cannot without the greatest sacrilege imaginable be reduced into a condition of slavery to any man, especially to a wicked, unjust, cruel tyrant."

L'ALLEGRO ANALYZED

The cheerful man drives loathed Melancholy away from his sight, names her parents and selects her fit abode.

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights
unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous
wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There, under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.

Bidding Melancholy begone, L'Allegro welcomes Mirth
and states two theories regarding her parentage.

But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There, on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.

L'Allegro invites Mirth to bring her eleven high-
spirited companions to dance with him.

Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
Nods and Becks and wreathèd Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,

And Laughter holding both his sides,
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprieved pleasures free:

L'Allegro groups the sights and sounds of morning which please him. Make a list of all words which appeal to the eye and then do the same with all terms which relate to the ear.

To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the plowman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,

And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Milton loved to write about the freshness of the morning and evening. Compare the foregoing selection from L'Allegro with this maturer one from *Paradise Lost*:

Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild: then silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train.

—*Paradise Lost*, Book IV, 651-660.

Note also his youthful love of light in L'Allegro and compare with it his incomparable prayer for light in *Paradise Lost* after he became blind.

And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate: there plant eyes; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

—*Paradise Lost*, Book III, 51-55.

L'Allegro finds pleasures in mid-day sights, a landscape panorama and the simple customs of the country people.

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landskip round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;

Meadows trim, with daisies pied;
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighboring eyes.
Hard by a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade,
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:

Note the variety in the foregoing passage. Observe the rhythm of the lines and take care to record the lively emotions they give you. Consider the contrast of barren mountains with flowery meadows, of wide rivers with shallow brooks. Review the first eight images, then the distant panorama of towers, cottage smoke, oaks, the shepherds, the dinner, the shepherdess, the bower, the field of golden grain and the meadow with its little hills of hay, and lastly the dancing of the peasants.

L'Allegro enjoys the gossip and the superstitions of these country people and gives a vivid account of their chatter.

Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinched and pulled, she said;
And he, by Friar's lantern led,—
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-laborers could not end;
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.

L'Allegro changes from the country to city pleasures and names them over as he reads about them in his room at midnight.

Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pagentry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

Mark the graceful tribute in the last two lines which Milton pays to Shakespeare.

L'Allegro now turns from the pleasures of day and asks Mirth to give him the delights of music. This passage is famous for its allusion to the story of Orpheus and his wife Eurydice—a story which Milton refers to again and again in his works.

And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.

Finally, L'Allegro concludes that if Mirth can give him these innocent pleasures, he will live with her.

These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Cerberus—the guardian dog of Hades (a monster with three heads and a serpent tail)

Stygian—adjective to Styx, the river encircling Hades

uncouth—ugly, repulsive

ebon shades—shades as black as ebony

low-browed—overhanging

Cimmerian—name of a people supposed to live in a sunless region on the confines of the lower world
dark Cimmerian desert—a desert shrouded in Cimmerian darkness

yclept—named

Euphrosyne—name of one of the three Graces meaning Mirth or Lightheartedness

Venus—Goddess of Love

Graces—Euphrosyne's sisters were Aglania (the bright) and Thalia (the beautiful)

Bacchus—god of wine and good cheer

sager—more wisely

frolic—frolicsome

Zephyr—West Wind

Aurora—Goddess of the Dawn

a-Maying—enjoying the sports of May (suitable to May)

buxom—lively, jolly

debonair—of good mien

quips—sharp, clever sayings

cranks—clever or humorous turn of speech

wanton wiles—playful tricks

becks—beckonings

wreathed—causing the features to wrinkle

Hebe—daughter of Jupiter and Juno, cup bearer to the gods on Olympus

sleek—soft, smooth

fantastic—improvised to suit the fancy

mountain nymph—love of "liberty" is characteristic of people dwelling in mountainous regions (*cf.* Swiss, Scotch)

unreproved—blameless, innocent

dappled—marked with small spots of gray cloud

sweet-briar—eglantine (here)

eglantine—(here) honeysuckle

rear—straggling end

hoar—white with frost, or shrouded in mist

state—stately progress (through the sky)

dight—arrayed

blithe—blithely

straight—immediately

landskip—landscape

follows—ploughed land, left unsown

laboring—big with (rain)

pied—of different colors

bosomed—embosomed

tufted—collected

cynosure—the object towards which all eyes are directed. The word, literally “dog’s tail” through its derivation from the Greek, was applied by the ancients to that portion of the Little Bear constellation, resembling a dog, which contains the pole star. By this star the Tyrian sailors were accustomed to steer their ships; hence it came to mean any object on which people fix their eyes. Cf. *Comus*, 342.

Corydon, Thyrsis, Phillis, Thestylis—favorite names given to shepherds and shepherdesses by writers of pastoral poetry

messes—dishes (of food)

bower—cottage

tanned haycock—a pile of dried hay

mead—meadow

secure—free from care

rebeck—a mediaeval, three-stringed fiddle, shaped and played like a violin

Fairy Mab—the mischievous Queen of the Fairies who sends dreams

junkets—any kind of sweetmeats

Friar's Lantern—Will-o'-the wisp or Jack-o'-lantern

drudging goblins—goblins doing drudgery work; goblins are imaginary beings, sometimes mischievous, sometimes kindly disposed, represented as of small size but great strength, supposed to haunt dark places, especially the bowels of the earth

shadowy—invisible

lubber—clownish, clumsy

crop-full—with a full stomach

flings—flings himself, darts

matin—morning

weeds—garments

store—an abundance of

Hymen—God of Marriage

taper—Hymen's torch

mask—masque

well-trod—abundant in dramatic literature or good acting

Jonson—Ben Jonson (1573-1637), Shakespeare's contemporary rival as a dramatist

sock—the low shoe worn by actors of comedy in ancient Greece and Rome, here symbolic for comic drama

lap—wrap, enfold

Lydian airs—the soft voluptuous music of the Lydians as opposed to the harsher Phrygian or Dorian music

bout—turn (in music)

mazes—difficult parts (of the music)

that—so that

Orpheus, Eurydice, Pluto—Orpheus was the most famous of all musicians. His wife Eurydice having died, he descended into Hades to bring her back to life. Charmed by the sweetness of his music, Pluto consented that Eurydice should return with him to the upper world, on condition that he should not look back until they were safely outside the bounds of Hades. When almost out, however, Orpheus, forgetting himself, turned around to see if she were coming, and she vanished from his sight

Elysian—The Elysian Fields, or Isles of the Blest, were the regions where those who were beloved of the gods dwelt in happiness, wandering among flowers and enjoying all the beauties which delight the senses or the imagination

MILTON'S IL PENSEROSO ANALYZED

IL PENSEROSO ANALYZED

The thoughtful man expels vain deluding joys from his sight, names their parents and commands them to dwell in some idle brain.

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.

Next he welcomes the nymph Melancholy, the opposite of Mirth, characterizes her, describes the color of her garments and states that she is the daughter of Vesta and Saturn.

But, hail! thou Goddess sage and holy!
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseeem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove

To set her beauty's praise above
 The Sea Nymphs, and their powers offended.
 Yet thou art higher far descended:
 Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
 To solitary Saturn bore;
 His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
 Such mixture was not held a stain.
 Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
 He met her, and in secret shades
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
 While yet there was no fear of Jove.

Note that the foregoing passage has six lines more than the corresponding passage in L'Allegro's welcome to Mirth. Observe, too, that the six additional lines describe Melancholy's visage and the color of her clothes.

Il Penseroso praises the character of the nymph, then bids her bring her six companions, especially the Cherub Contemplation.

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, steadfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestic train,
 And sable stole of cypress lawn
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
 Come; but keep thy wonted state,
 With even step, and musing gait,
 And looks commercing with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
 There, held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
 And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
 And add to these retirèd Leisure,
 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;

But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The Cherub Contemplation ;
And the mute Silence hist along,

The portrait of the nymph as a nun is more complete than the sketch of Mirth. Il Penseroso takes pains to make Melancholy almost human. He dresses her in graceful robes of dark colors and gives her a rapt soul which he does not want her to change. L'Allegro does not bother about adding any finishing touches to Mirth in the passage which is parallel to the foregoing. Il Penseroso thinks so highly of his divine nun that he gives twenty-four lines to her and her companions while L'Allegro needs but fifteen for Mirth and her crew.

Il Penseroso's conduct now becomes serious. A solemn mood possesses him. He seeks tranquillity and removes everything lively. L'Allegro in the lines corresponding to these paints a panorama of eight pleasing pictures. Il Penseroso also gives a bird's-eye picture of the heavens but makes the moon so important that his other evening pleasures are insignificant.

'Les Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er th' accustomed oak.
Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo to hear thy even-song ;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,

Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging low with sullen roar;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.

Review the sounds in this selection and contrast them with the sounds in L'Allegro. Study the unity in this passage as to its solemnity. Tranquil moonlight pleases *Il Penseroso* better than dancing sunbeams. Dying embers which counterfeit a gloom are dearer to him than the light of day.

Il Penseroso thinks that midnight is the best time to study Astronomy, Philosophy, Tragedy, Music and Poetry.

Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or underground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy

In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower;
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

If emphasis by number of lines indicates Milton's taste, the foregoing passage shows that he considers serious pleasures more important than light ones or he would not have given them twenty-one lines more than he gave to the noon-day and afternoon enjoyments of *L'Allegro*. *Il Penseroso* takes delight in the joys of a stormy morning. His images succeed one another with less animation than those of *L'Allegro*. This passage lacks the brisk pace and the abrupt change that is so characteristic of the preceding poem.

Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frownced, as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,

But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or ushered with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves,

Milton's maturer thoughts on morning are far more complimentary. Note the following:

'Neither breath of Morn, when she ascends
 With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun
 On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
 Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
 Nor grateful ev'ning mild; nor silent Night
 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by Moon,
 Or glitt'ring star-light, without thee is sweet.'

—*Paradise Lost*. Book IV, lines 651-657.

Morn,
 Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
 Unbarr'd the gates of light.

MILTON—*Paradise Lost*. Bk. VI. L. 2.

Now morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
 Advancing, sow'd the earth with Orient pearl.

MILTON—*Paradise Lost*. Bk. V. L. 1.

Il Penseroso shuns the noonday's brightness and finds his pleasures in twilight groves under the shades of pine and oak by some brook whose waters will entice him to sleep and dream.

And, when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
 To archèd walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
 Of pine, or monumental oak,

Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
 Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
 There, in close covert, by some brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look,
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honeyed thigh,
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring,
 With such consort as they keep,
 Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
 And let some strange mysterious dream
 Wave at his wings, in airy stream
 Of lively portraiture displayed,
 Softly on my eyelids laid;

Milton's early fondness for groves and trees resulted later in the following beautiful passage:

This was the place

A happy rural seat of various view
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
 Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden' rind,
 Hung amiable, Hespeian fables true
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interposed;
 Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
 Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.

—*Paradise Lost*. Book IV, lines 246-257.

Il Penseroso loves to wander with Melancholy through the cathedral to enjoy with her its mighty arches, its picture windows and its heavenly organ, its inspiring choir, and its divine anthems which brought paradise before his eyes.

And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
 Or the unseen Genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious cloister's pale
 And love the high embowèd roof.
 With antique pillars massy-proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light.
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full-voiced quire below,
 In service high and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies,
 And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.

Note that in line 162 Il Penseroso finds interest in the human quire. Previous to this line no one but the nymph gets his attention.

Il Penseroso states his chief ambitions.

And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 Where I may sit and rightlly spell
 Of every star that heaven doth shew,
 And every herb that sips the dew,
 Till old experience do attain
 To something like prophetic strain.

Il Penseroso selects Melancholy.

These pleasures, Melancholy, give;
 And I with thee will choose to live.

Note that the Pensive man does not doubt Melancholy's ability to give these pleasures as L'Allegro doubts Mirth's power to grant him the joys that he likes.

Unusual Words and Phrases

bested—help, avail

fancies fond—foolish fancies

possess—occupy

likest—most like

pensioners—those receiving pension

Morpheus—God of Sleep

to hit—to be suited, adapted to

Memnon—son of Tithonias and Aurora, the dark-skinned handsome king of the Ethiopians, who was slain by Achilles before Troy

Ethiop Queen—Cassiopeia, wife of Cepheus, who boasted that the beauty of her daughter Andromeda exceeded that of the sea nymphs (Nereids). After their death both mother and daughter were transferred to the skies as constellation of stars; *i.e.*, “starred”

Vesta—goddess of the chaste hearth

Saturn—son of Heaven and Earth

Saturn's reign—golden age of innocence of the human race

Ida—Mount Ida on the Island of Crete

darkest grain—deep blue or purple

sable—refers to the color of that animal's fur

stole of cypress lawn—robe of crepe of the finest kind

decent—comely, graceful

wonted—accustomed

state—stately bearing, dignity

commercing—communing

forget thyself to marble—become as insensible to your surroundings as a marble statue

sparefast—temperate abstinence

Muses—the nine Muses were the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne. They were: Calliope, Muse of epic poetry; Clio, Muse of history;

Erato, Muse of love ditties; Euterpe, Muse of lyric poetry; Melpomene, Muse of tragedy; Polyhymnia, Muse of sacred poetry; Terpsichore, Muse of choral song and dance; Thalia, Muse of comedy; and Urania, Muse of astronomy

aye—always, forever

yon—yonder

hush—hush (an imperative)

Philomel—the nightingale. Philomela, the daughter of Pandion, was, because of her part in the murder of her nephew, Itylus, changed by the gods into a nightingale, in which form she constantly bewails her fate in sweet song. The student should read Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* and Matthew Arnold's *Philomela*.

Cynthia—goddess of the moon who was born in Delos where Mt. Cynthus is

accustomed oak—the tree where the bird was accustomed to sing

chauntress—songsters

noon—high point of her (the moon's) course

still removed—quiet and secluded

bellman—night watchman

Bear—constellation of the Great Bear

Hermes—an ancient Egyptian philosopher

unsphere—bring back from the unseen world, *i.e.*, study his doctrine carefully

fleshly nook—body

consent—a feeling with, a true relation with, sympathy

sceptered pall—royal robes

Thebes—capital of Boeotia, whose royal house and its fate was one of the favorite themes in Greek tragedy

Pelops—grandfather of Agamemnon, a central figure in the Trojan war

Troy—scene of the Trojan war

buskined stage—stage where buskined, *i.e.*, high-heeled shoes are worn, the tragic stage

Musaeus—a mythical bard of Thrace, contemporary of Orpheus

Cambuscan, Tartar, Camball, Algarsife, Canace—Cambuscan, King of Tartary, had two sons, Camball and Algarsife, and one daughter, Canace. The virtuous ring (which gave the wearer power to understand the language of birds and the properties of plants), the glass (a kind of magic mirror), and the wondrous horse of brass (which had the power of flight), were, according to the tale, sent by the King of India to the Tartar King and his daughter. No one knows whose wife Canace became.

him—referring to Chaucer (1340-1400) and his unfinished Squire's Tale

turneys—tournaments

civil suited—in plain (citizen's) clothes

tricked—adorned

frounced—with curly hair

Attic boy—Cephalus, a hunter, who was beloved by Aurora, goddess of the dawn

kerchieft—having the head covered as with a kerchief

pipng loud—whistling shrilly

still—gentle

minute drops—drops falling a minute apart

brown—dark

Sylvan—Sylvanus, Roman forest deity

garish—staring, glaring

consort—in harmony, in time with

due feet—feet that are due at a certain place and
certain time

pale—inclosure, boundary

embowed—arched

massy proof—massy (heavy) enough to be proof
against the weight they are to support

storied windows—windows of stained glass, representing Biblical stories

quire—choir

hairy gown—the coarse garment of monks

spell—interpret

strain—utterance

MILTON'S COMUS ANALYZED

MILTON'S COMUS ANALYZED

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, afterward in the habit of THYRSIS
COMUS with his crew

THE LADY

FIRST BROTHER

SECOND BROTHER

SABRINA, the Nymph

The Chief Persons which presented were:

THE LORD BRACKLEY

MR. THOMAS EGERTON, his Brother

THE LADY ALICE EGERTON

COMUS ANALYZED

Monologue I

Story

An attendant spirit enters, states that his home is before the starry threshold of Jove's court, that his companions are bright and happy spirits, that their mild realm is blessed with calm and serene air, that men strive to keep up a frail and feverish being on earth, that they are unmindful of the crown that virtue gives to her true servants after death among the enthroned gods on sainted seats, that there are some mortals who aspire to reach heaven through living virtuous lives, that his duty is to save such aspiring beings, that nothing but to save their souls would e'er induce him to expose his rainbow clothes to the vile vapors of earth, that a noble and powerful peer is to be the ruler of Wales, that his two sons and his daughter are coming to see their father installed in office, that their journey is beset by many dangers, that Jove has sent him to defend and guard these children, that Comus, a bold magician, would otherwise take advantage of their youth and mislead them, that Comus dwells in a dark wood, that this necromancer has the power to change the countenance of each person into the face of some animal and that he will, to save the children, put off his sky-robcs and assume the manners of a musical swain in the service of the Governor of Wales.

Analysis

It is difficult to understand why Milton, who was familiar with the graceful dialogues which Shakespeare uses to give information in opening his plays, should begin this masque with a long-winded soliloquy of ninety-three lines. One explanation which might account for its success in spite of its prolixity is that it was sung and not recited. Consequently the reader ought to judge this monologue not as a piece of dramatic art but as an allegory with a musical setting. Just as no lover of opera would care to spend his evenings listening to a dull recital of operatic stories without music, so the lover of drama must expect to be bored by this part of *Comus* unless he hears it sung.

Another theory which might throw some light on this opening scene is Milton's independence. Of all the poets, he is the least imitative. Perhaps he felt that it was better to give the audience the information delivered by the Attendant Spirit in his own direct way than to put it into the more pleasing and more graceful style of his great predecessor.

Leaving the construction, the student can at once see even in these ninety-three lines the many-sided mind of Milton. To a lover of Spencer, the poem will always be great as an allegory. To him who finds it dull as a drama, its divine philosophy will not fail to charm. To a lover of music, its lyric beauty will never lose its delight. To one who finds its characters prosy it will always be admired for its excellent portrait of Milton and to the reader who likes poetry with a classical background the allusions to Jove, to Neptune, Bacchus, Circe and Phoebus promise a gallery of portraits which will recall "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome."

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT EXPLAINS HIS MISSION

Spirit—Before the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call Earth, and, with low-thoughted care,
Confined and pestered in this pinfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants
Amongst the enthroned gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key
That opes the palace of eternity.
To such my errand is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapors of this sin-worn mould.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT STATES THE SITUATION

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high, and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the Sea-girt isles,
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep,
Which he to grace his tributary gods
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents: But this Isle,
The greatest, and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his bluehair'd deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring, nurs't in princely lore,

Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-intrusted scepter. But their way
Lies through the perplex't paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger.
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovran Jove
I was dispatcht for their defence, and guard;

The life of Comus, the magician of the wood, with
an account of his parentage, birth, home and skill as a
necromancer.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crushed the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transformed,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell. (Who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)
This Nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks,
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus named:
Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And, in thick shelter of black shades embowered,
Excels his mother at her mighty art;
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst),
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,
Or ounce or tiger, hog or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were.

And they, so perfect is their misery,
 Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
 But boast themselves more comely than before,
 And all their friends and native home forget,
 To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, DISGUISED AS A SHEPHERD, GUIDES
 THE FAVORITES OF JOVE SAFELY THROUGH THE WOOD

Ther'fore, when any favour'd of high Jove
 Chances to pass through this adventrous glade,
 Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
 I shoot from Heav'n, to give him safe convoy
 As now I do: but first I must put off
 These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,
 And take the weeds and likeness of a swain,
 That to the service of this house belongs,
 Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
 Well knows to still the wilde winds when they roar,
 And hush the waving woods, nor of less faith,
 And in this office of his mountain watch,
 Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
 Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
 Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Jove—Jupiter, the king of the gods
insphered—living on one of the ten concentric
 spheres which moved in celestial harmony
pestered—encumbered
pinfold—an enclosure used to hold unruly cattle
sainted—holy
golden key—virtue
ambrosial—immortal
weeds—clothes
mould—earth
Neptune—the god of the sea
by lot—the sons of Saturn drew lots to decide which

part of the world each was to have. Neptune
drew the sea and all its islands as his portion

nether Jove—Pluto

several—separate

tridents—fork-like scepters with three prongs

this Isle—England, Scotland and Wales

quarters—divides into distinct regions

blue-haired deities—Gods inferior to Neptune and
Pluto

tract—Wales

Peer—the Earl of Bridgewater

mickle—great

haughty nation—Wales

nursed in princely lore—given the education befitting
the needs of a noble family

attend—be present

perplexed—entangled

drear wood—dense forest near Ludlow castle in
Wales

tender age—Lady Alice Edgerton was about 14; the
two brothers were younger

Bacchus—the god of revelry and wine

Tuscan—from Tuscany, a province of northern Italy.

After the Tuscan mariners transformed. The story is that on one occasion Tuscan pirates attempted to carry Bacchus to Italy to sell him as a slave. Suddenly the chains dropped from his limbs and he assumed the form of a lion. The ship stood still while vines grew up and entwined themselves round the mast and sails; and the pirates, in terror, leaped into the sea, where they were transformed into dolphins

Tyrrhene—Italian

as the winds listed—at the pleasure of the winds
 which blow first one way and then another
Circe's Island—an island in the Adriatic near the
 shore of Tuscany

Circe—a famous Greek enchantress who possessed
 the power of changing men into beasts

Comus—a creation of Milton's; he is not a classical
 character

Celtic—French

Iberian—Spanish

Orient—Eastern

Phoebus—Phoebus Apollo was the sun god

the drouth of Phoebus—parched by the heat of the
 sun

fond—foolish

ounce—a panther

Iris—color of the rainbow

swain—a countryman

pipe—a musical instrument

Monologue II

Story

In an address to his half-human, half-beast followers Comus gives an excellent description of early evening. Next, he tells them how to relish the shout and revelry of midnight in the absence of Rigor, Advice, Age and Severity. Turning their attention to the dance as a form of jollity in the lines

Come, let us our rites begin—

'Tis only daylight that makes sin

Which these dense shades shall ne'er report,

he sums up his wild, useless, wasteful philosophy of life and bids them join hands and dance. But feeling a more

serious person near, he breaks up the carnival and orders his monsters to hide. Then, incidentally, he informs the reader that a virgin lost in the woods is near, that by hurling his dazzling spells into the air he has power to create illusions, that in the garb of a harmless villager he will appear friendly to her and that he will first step aside and, if he can, learn what is her history.

Analysis

Again the reader is subjected to seventy-seven lines of dreary information. Comus, the agent of Evil, is introduced and lives up to all that was said about him in the preceding comments of the Attendant Spirit. There is also the suggestion that a Spirit representing Good is to enter and that there will be a conflict between Comus and the good virgin who stands for a life of purity.

Lines 93-144, however, have genuine lyric beauty equal to the octometers and pentameters of L'Allegro and Il Penseroso. Compare these verses with those of L'Allegro 25-40 and note the similarity of meter. Observe also the contrast between the approved pleasures of L'Allegro which are the approved delights that daylight bestows and the mysterious unapproved rites of Comus which cannot be performed in the light of day. In L'Allegro, the measure is the harmless fantastic toe; in Comus there is the intemperate tipsy dance. The joys of the cheerful man are mingled with laughter and liberty; the pleasures of the enchanter are noisy and riotous. In short, the one is satisfied with quips and cranks and wreathed smiles; the other seeks the wilder and more boisterous emotions which are produced by license and by wine.

Classical allusions are ever present in this monologue. "The steep Atlantic stream" recalls Iliad XIV. The

starry quire brings up Pythagoras' doctrine of the music of the spheres, while the references to Venus, Phoebus, Cotytto and Hecate, all assert Milton's knowledge of Grecian mythology.

Passages to be Carefully Studied for Characterization

COMUS TREATS HIS FOLLOWERS TO A DESCRIPTION
OF EVENING

COMUS enters, with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him his throng of monsters, having the heads of sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistening. They come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

Comus—The star that bids the shepherd fold
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.

A PICTURE OF AN ENCHANTER BY HIMSELF

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright. Some virgin sure—
For so I can distinguish by mine art—
Be nighted in these woods! Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains; I shall ere long
Be well stocked with as fair a herd as grazed
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,

And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
 Which must not be, for that's against my course.
 I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
 And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
 Baited with reasons not unplausible,
 Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
 And hug him into snares. When once her eye
 Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
 I shall appear some harmless villager
 Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
 But here she comes; I fairly step aside,
 And hearken if I may her business hear.

Unusual Words and Phrases

- charming-rod*—a wand supposed to hypnotize the attention
rout—a disorderly company
glistening—glistening
star—Hesperus, the star of the evening
fold—home of the sheep
axle—a part of Phoebus' gilded chariot
steep—the long curve at the horizon is high or deep
slope—oblique rays
dusky pole—opposite the pole lit by the sun
pacing toward the other goal—journeying toward the east
saws—maxims
of purer fire—having a diviner nature
quire—the music of the spheres, equivalent to choir
nightly watchful spheres—stars
morrice move—a Moorish dance
shelves—flat ledges of rock
pert—lively
dapper—quick
dimpled—dimple is the diminutive of dip

wakes—night watches

rites—questionable customs

dun—dark

Cotyto—the goddess of licentiousness

Stygian—darkness of the infernal region

spets—spits

Hecate—goddess of witchcraft

blabbing eastern scout—the sun

nice—refined

Indian steep—Eastern horizon

cabin'd loophole—the cabin of the sun in the heavens.

This represents the sun as rising from a bed of clouds

round—a dance measure

shrouds—hiding places

charms—spells

wily trains—cunning allurements

spongy—able to absorb

blear—blurred cheating

glozing—deceitful and flattering

gear—business tasks

Monologue III

Story

The lady of the story enters and, talking to herself, gives to the invisible and listening Comus an account of her weariness, the efforts of her brothers to get refreshments, their failure to return, her anxiety about where they went, her feeling that they have lost their way, her distrust that night has stolen them, her surprise at not finding any one in the spot where she had heard such

sounds of merriment, the thousand fantasies which throng her memory regarding the mysteries of night, her trust in a clear conscience, her belief that Faith, Hope, Chastity and God will keep her life and honor unassailed, and her efforts to tell her brothers where she is, through her beautiful echo song.

Analysis

The reader who expected to find Comus a well-constructed drama will be disappointed with Monologue III. It is as monotonous as the two preceding soliloquies and does little more than introduce the second important character.

It has, however, great poetic interest. The sixteen lines from 205 to 220 at once win praise from real lovers of poetry. The reader feels immediately that Milton is talking, that the great poet is here setting forth his own moral standards and that these lines express sublimity, elevated thought and an inspiring tone rarely found in poetry. Unlike the soulful philosophy in lines 205-220 the echo song, lines 230-243, charms with its alliteration, assonance, harmony of soft sounds, and its colorful allusion to the sad love story of Echo and Narcissus.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE LADY RELATES THE LOSS OF HER BROTHER

Lady—This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now. Methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
Such as the jocund flute or gamesome pipe
Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,
When, for their teeming flocks and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous *Pan*,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth

To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet, oh! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stepped, as they said, to the next thicket-side
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then when the grey-hooded even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phoebus' wain.

THE THEFT OF DARKNESS AND THIEVISH NIGHT

But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labor of my thoughts. 'Tis likeliest
They had engaged their wandering steps too far;
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me. Else, O thievish Night,
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars
That Nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps
With everlasting oil to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveler?

Passages to be Memorized

THE VIRTUOUS MIND FEELS NOT FEAR

What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And airy tongues that syllable men's names
On sands and shores and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong-siding champion, Conscience.
Oh, welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,

And thou, unblemished form of Chastity!
 I see ye visibly, and now believe
 That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
 To keep my life and honor unassailed. . . .

SONG

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
 Within thy airy shell
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet-embroidered vale
 Where the love-lorn Nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
 That liketh thy Narcissus are?
 O if thou have
 Hid them in some flowery cave,
 Tell me but where,
 Sweet Queen of Parley, daughter of the Sphere!
 So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
 And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies!

Unusual Words and Phrases

methought—it seemed to me
jocund—merry
hinds—peasants
granges—granaries
Pan—god of shepherds and fields
amiss—in error
swilled insolence—drunken rudeness
votarist—a religious pilgrim bound by a vow
Phoebus' wain—the sun car of Apollo
rife—prevalent
single—only
strong siding—supporting
new-enlivened—encouraged

Echo—the nymph who loved Narcissus and pined
away until nothing remained of her but her voice

Meander—a winding river in southern Asia

Queen of Parley—queen of speech

Daughter of the Sphere—daughter of the air

Monologue IV

Story

Listening under cover of shady boughs to the pleasing tones of the echo song, Comus in a soliloquy compares the singing of his mother Circe and her sirens to the strains of the new warbler before him and admits to himself that the stranger has the more delightful voice.

Analysis

The singing of the lady charms the enchanter so that he resolves to speak to her and to make her his queen.

The monologue does not advance the plot but it points out that Comus can be moved by song and that, in spite of his vile trade, he is capable of giving graceful compliments. Again the allusion to Circe, the sirens, the naides, Elysium, Scylla and Charybdis make one feel that it is not Comus, but Milton, who is talking; and such feeling causes the reader to tire of a piece in which all the characters talk alike.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE POWER OF SONG

Comus—Can any mortal mixture of earth's mold
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,

And with these raptures moves the vocal air
 To testify his hidden residence.
 How sweetly did they float upon the wings
 Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
 At every fall smoothing the raven down
 Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
 My mother Circè with the Sirens three,
 Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
 Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
 Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul,
 And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
 And chid her barking waves into attention,
 And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause.
 Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,
 And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;

COMUS PRAISES THE ECHO SONG

But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
 I never heard till now.

Unusual Words and Phrases

vocal air—air which carries the voice
his, its—refers to something holy
empty-vaulted—starless
fall—lower tone of the voice
smoothing the raven down—the song of the lady
 smooths the raven plumage of darkness
Circè—irresistible mermaid queen, who held Ulysses
 by her charms
sirens—daughters of the river-god Achelous, who
 lured sailors to destruction by the charm of
 their songs
flowery-kirtled—the nymphs had garments made of
 or trimmed with flowers
Naiades—river, spring and fountain goddesses

baleful injurious

take the prisoned soul—make the soul prisoner
lap—enwrap

Elysium—heaven of the Greeks

Scylla and Charybdis—Scylla, a beautiful maiden, changed by her jealous rival, Circe, into a monster, surrounded by hissing serpents and barking dogs. She then leaped into the sea and became a rock, supposed to be located in the straits of Messina, between Italy and Sicily. Opposite Scylla was the terrible whirlpool, Charybdis. Cf. Vergil Aeneid III, 420

home-felt delight—feeling at ease

Dialogue I

Story

Comus addresses the Lady, praises her song, learns that she has become separated from her brothers and that she is very eager to find them—all of which he already knew. Under the form of friendship he offers to guide her to a humble hut where she will be safe until her friends are found. Thinking she could not be less secure in Comus' home than alone in such a dark wood, she accepts and starts with him to his "low but loyal cottage."

Analysis

The dialogue here is purely informative without wit, humor or emotion of any kind. It carries the reader a step nearer the climax by placing the Lady in the hands of the enchanter. The conflict, however, has not yet begun and, therefore, the story still drags.

*Passages to be Carefully Studied*COMUS GIVES THE LADY A FLATTERING DESCRIPTION OF
HER BROTHERS

Comus—Two such I saw, what time the labored ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human, as they stood.
I took it for a faery vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colors of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,
And, as I passed, I worshipped. If those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heaven
To help you find them.

COMUS AS GUIDE AND HOST

Comus—I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell, of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighborhood;
And, if your stray attendance be yet lodged,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatched pallet rouse. If otherwise,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

THE ABODE OF HONEST COURTESY

Lady— Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest-offered courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds,
With smoky rafters, than in tapestry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was named,

And yet is most pretended. In a place
 Less warranted than this, or less secure,
 I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
 Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
 To my proportioned strength!—Shepherd, lead on.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Sylvanus—god of woods and fields
ill is lost—there is little loss in losing
extreme shift—last resource
near-ushering—waiting in close attendance
forestalling—looking forward
hit—guess
imports—is of importance
beside—apart from
Hebe—goddess of youth, and cup-bearer to Olympian gods
what time—when
laboured—wearied with labor
swinked—tired, weary
hedger—hedge repairer, agricultural laborer
mantling—spreading
port—bearing
element—air
plighted—folded, plaited
readiest—quickest
dingle—a narrow valley between steep hills
dell—dale, cleft, not as deep as dingle
bosky bourn—shrubby banked stream
stray attendance—strayed attendants
shroud—hidden
low roosted—resting on the ground
thatched pallet—nest

rouse—awake

sooner—more readily

warranted—secure

eye me—look on, watch me

square my trial—fit (adjust) my trial in proportion
to my strength

Dialogue II

Story

The two brothers enter and discuss philosophy. The elder in a fine strain of real poetry describes the night of darkness and of shades and pleads with the faint stars and the fair moon to send them a mere rush candle and thus become their star of Arcady or Tyrian Cynosure. The younger brother, lamenting they neither see the sights nor hear the sounds of home, bemoans the fate of their lost sister. To his pessimistic ideas, the optimistic brother expresses strong feelings about the power of virtue to protect the weak. In reply, the melancholy one contrasts the relative safety of a hermit with Beauty in a lonely wood and concludes that the hermit would be the safer. The cheerful one refuses to believe that harm will come to his sister and asserts that she has a hidden strength which will be sufficient for her safety. The dejected debater asks what is the hidden strength and his more hopeful brother in an eloquent speech tells him it is chastity. Convinced, the younger brother lauds the charms of Philosophy until their conversation is interrupted by the halloa of the Attendant Spirit disguised as their own shepherd.

Analysis

Though this dialogue may be regarded as a debate between L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, it is interesting to readers because it contains the gist of Milton's philosophy of life. No one but a great poet could pen such exquisite descriptions as are in the first ten lines, such youthful longings as are in the next eighteen verses, such a lofty conception of virtue as is in lines 373-375, such elevated honor as is expressed in lines 381-385, such warnings to beauty as can be found in 383-387, such noble sentiments as flow from 420 to 427, such learned allusions as are met with from 428 to 475, and such a tribute to the charms of divine Philosophy as is found in lines 476 to 480.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

LOST IN THE WOODS

Eld. Bro.—Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
That wont'st to love the traveler's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite dammed up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long leveled rule of streaming light,
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

. LONGING FOR SIGHTS, SOUNDS AND SISTER

Second Brother— Or, if our eyes
Be barred that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks, penned in their wattlèd cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock

Count the night-watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs.
But, oh, that hapless virgin, our lost sister!
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillowed head, fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement and affright,
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat!

VIRTUE

Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk.

WISDOM AND CONTEMPLATION

And Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retirèd solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That, in the various bustle of resort,
Were all to-ruffled, and sometimes impaired.

THE REWARD OF HONOR

He that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i' the center, and enjoy bright day;

THE DESPAIR OF A DARK SOUL

But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the midday sun;
Himself in his own dungeon.

Passages to be Memorized

THE SECURITY OF MUSING MEDITATION

Second Brother— 'Tis most true
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate-house ;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence ?

BEAUTY MUST BE GUARDED

But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunned heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a single, helpless maiden pass
Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night or loneliness it recks me not ;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned sister.

THE POWER OF CHASTITY

'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity :
She that has that is clad in complete steel,
And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharbored heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds ;
Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity.

HEAVEN IS THE GUARDIAN OF THE CHASTE

So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,

THE CHARMS OF PHILOSOPHY

Second Brother—How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

Passage to be Carefully Studied

THE STRENGTH OF INNOCENCE

Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
By grotts and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblenched majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin or swart faery of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tamed the brindled lioness
And spotted mountain-pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Feared her stern frown, and she was queen o' the
woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield
That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin,
Wherewith she freezed her foes to congealed stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,

And noble grace that dashed brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?

HOW THE SOUL LOSES ITS PURITY

But, when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved,
And linked itself by carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.

Unusual Words and Phrases

unmuffle—uncover (yourselves)

benison—blessing

stoop—lower

visage—face

Chaos—created by the “double night” of darkness
and shades

disinherit—drive out

dammed up—stopped

rush candle—a rush light, obtained from the pith
of a rush dipped in oil

wicker hole—window (of poor cottage plastered
with clay, filled in with twigs)

Star of Arcady—any star in the constellation of the
Great Bear

Arcady—Arcadia, a mountainous region in the cen-
ter of the Peloponnesus

- Tyrian Cynosure*—the constellation of the Lesser Bear, by which the Tyrian mariners steered their ships
wattled cotes—sheep inclosures made of interwoven twigs
pastoral reed—a shepherd's pipe (made of reeds of oaten stalks)
oaten stops—holes in an oaten pipe
innumerable—innumerable
burs—burrs
over-exquisite—over-inquisitive, over-anxious
cast the fashion—forecast the character
forestall—anticipate
so to seek—so perplexed
unprincipled—not grounded in the principles
bosoms—holds in her bosom
plumes—arranges
affects—has liking for
Hesperian—the Hesperides were three nymphs, daughters of Hesperus, who guarded the golden apples of Juno
dragon watch—a dragon (Ladon) assisted the Hesperides in their watch over the tree
unsunned—hidden (from the sunlight)
wink on—close the eye to
it recks me not—I do not heed
unowned—unprotected
squint—squint-eyed, looking askance at
trace—traverse
unharbored—without plans of shelter
infamous—of ill fame
bandite (or mountaineer)—outlaw
shagged—shaggy, rugged

unblenched—undaunted

meagre hag—lean witch

goblin—elf, gnome

swart—swarthy, black

Dian—Diana, goddess of the hunt

brinded—brindled, streaked

mountain pard—panther

Cupid—god of love, son of Venus and Mars

Gorgon—snaky-headed Gorgon shield: The three Gorgons, female monsters whose heads were covered with hissing serpents instead of hair, had the power of turning into stone any one who looked at them. Perseus, aided by a magic cap, wings, and a wonderful sword, managed to cut off the head of Medusa, the mortal one of the three, and gave it to Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, who placed the snaky head in the center of her shield. There it still retained its original property of turning any one who saw it into stone. Milton gives the myth his own allegorical meaning.

oft—frequent

imbodies and imbrutes—takes on a body and becomes brutish

charnel-vaults—burial vaults

crabbed—sour, crabby

nectared—dipped in nectar, the drink of the gods

crude surfeit—unhealthful excess

night-foundered—lost in the night

Dialogue III

Story

The Attendant Spirit takes the form of a shepherd employed by the Earl of Bridgewater, seeks the brothers, tells them of Comus the sorcerer, of the power of this woodland wizard, of his meeting with their sister, and of her dangerous position. He also informs them that their swords are useless against the spells of Comus, that Moly is an herb which can offset the enchanter's power, and that he has Moly with him. Giving them some of this root, he leads them to Comus' castle and directs them to assault the wizard, to break his glass, to shed his luscious liquor on the ground and above all to seize his wand.

Analysis

In this dialogue Milton writes poetry regardless of the dramatic effect. He makes the Attendant Spirit repeat over again the character of Comus which he gave in Monologue I. He allows the Spirit facing danger to give information just as if the Lady's future were not at stake. Consequently the action of the piece is weak and slow.

These lines, however, are worthy of close study. They mirror Milton's mind, show his regard for his profession and suggest through allusion wide and accurate scholarship.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE HIGH CALLING OF POETS

Spirit—I'll tell ye. 'Tis not vain or fabulous
(Though so esteemed by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse
Of dire Chimeras and enchanted isles,

And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.

A HEAVENLY VOICE

Spirit—At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wished she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death. But, oh! ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honored Lady, your dear sister.
Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear;
And "O poor hapless nightingale," thought I,
"How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!"

THE DOUBTING BROTHER

Sec. Bro.— O night and shades,
How are ye joined with hell in triple knot
Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, brother?

THE HOPEFUL OPTIMIST

Eld. Bro.— Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me. Against the threats
Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:
Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt,
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory.

THE DESTINY OF EVIL

Eld. Bro.—But evil on itself shall black recoil,
 And mix no more with goodness, when at last,
 Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
 It shall be in eternal restless change
 Self-fed and self-consumed.

A VALIANT, BOASTFUL BROTHER

Eld. Bro.—Against the opposing will and arm of heaven
 May never this just sword be lifted up :
 But for that damned magician, let him be girt
 With all the grisly legions that troop
 Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
 Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
 'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
 And force him to return his purchase back,
 Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
 Cursed as his life.

SWORDS AND BOASTING USELESS AGAINST COMUS

Spirit— Alas! good venturous youth,
 I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
 But here thy sword can do thee little stead.
 Far other arms and other weapons must
 Be those that quell the might of hellish charms.
 He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
 And crumble all thy sinews.

THE PLEASURES OF SHEPHERDS

Spirit— Care and utmost shifts
 How to secure the Lady from surprisal,
 Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
 Of small regard to see to, yet well skilled
 In every virtuous plant and healing herb
 That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray.
 He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing;
 Which, when I did, he on the tender grass
 Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy,

And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
 And shew me simples of a thousand names,
 Telling their strange and vigorous faculties.

THE VALUE OF HÆMONY

Spirit—Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
 But of divine effect, he culled me out:
 The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
 Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain
 Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;
 And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.
 He called it Hæmony, and gave it me,
 And bade me keep it as of sovran use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
 Or ghastly Furies' apparition.
 I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,
 Till now that this extremity compelled.
 But now I find it true; for by this means
 I knew the foul enchanter, though disguised,
 Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
 And yet came off.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT TELLS HOW TO ASSAULT COMUS

If you have this about you
 (As I will give you when we go) you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
 And brandished blade rush on him; break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquor on the ground;
 But seize his wand. Though he and his curst crew
 Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
 Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,
 Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

Unusual Words and Phrases

ironstakes—swords

Thyrsis—name of a shepherd (taken from the pastorals of Theocritus)

huddling—hurrying

madrigal—a pastoral or shepherd's song

swain—a country man, peasant

pent—penned, shut up

toy—trivial matter

sadly—seriously

prithee—I pray thee

storied—told, related

Chimeras—the Chimeras were fire-breathing monsters with the head of a lion, the tail of a dragon and the body of a goat

navel—center

immured—enclosed

witcheries—enchantments

murmurs—murmured spells or enchantments

mintage—stamp

charactered—engraved, stamped

crofts—small hillside fields

brow—overhang, line

Hecate—a Thracian goddess of witchcraft (whom the Romans called *dea triformis*)

unweeting—unwittingly, unknowing

dew-besprent—sprinkled with dew

interwove—interwoven

meditate—practise

drowsy-frighted—drowsy and frightened

still—always

took—taken, charmed

create a soul—breathe life even into the dead

harrowed—distracted, torn

period—sentence

for me—for my part, as far as I am concerned

grisly—horrible, causing terror

Acheron—a river of Hades, here used for the whole region

Harpies and Hydras—The Harpies were three monsters that befouled whatever they touched. they had the face of a woman, the body of a vulture, wings, and sharp claws. Their attack on Aeneas is described in the *Acneid*, iii, 212. The Hydra was a many-headed monster, the offspring of Echidna and Typhon, that infested the neighborhood of Lake Lerna in the Peloponnesus, and was finally destroyed by Hercules.

Ind—India

purchase—acquisition, prey, booty

emprise—enterprise

virtuous—having healing power

scrip—wallet

simples—medicinal herbs or drugs

culled me out—picked out for me

clouted shoon—patched, clumsy shoes

Moly—a magical plant (which Hermes gave Ulysses to resist Circe)

Hæmony—name coined by Milton; a weed having magic power

souvan—sovereign, supremely efficacious

Furies—grim monsters of divine vengeance

lime-twigs—snares

necromancer's—sorcerer's

Vulcan—god of fire. His son, Cacus, vomited huge volumes of smoke when pursued by Hercules (Vergil)

Dialogue IV

Story

In a palace filled with sensuous delights such as sparkling wines, crystal goblets, snowy linens, shining silver, flowers and fountains, the lady, set in an enchanted chair, is the prisoner of Comus. When she starts to rise, he threatens to chain her nerves up in alabaster. She replies that he cannot touch the freedom of her mind. The magician then tries to persuade her into drinking some julep which will restore her spirits. Turning upon him, she calls him a false traitor and reminds him of the cottage of safe abode he promised her. Comus next goes into a rhapsody in favor of the pleasures and enjoyments of the senses and advises her to have a good time while she is young. Again, she hurls defiance at him and defends virtue and all the principles of morality. Persistent, Comus once more is coaxing her to drink when the brothers rush in and drive him and his crowd away; but as they forget to seize his wand they cannot release their sister. Luckily, the Attendant Spirit comes in, invokes Sabrina, a water nymph, to rescue the Lady. Sabrina and her train rise from the river and free the sister. The Attendant Spirit then guides her to her father's residence.

Analysis

It will be much easier for the student to understand this word duel between Comus and the Lady if he will think of Comus as an out-and-out Epicurean of the loosest type and the Lady as a Stoic of Stoics, making virtue the corner-stone of her life. In all the arguments of Comus there are numerous sensual suggestions which can be read between the lines. The rebuttals of the Lady on the other hand, contain lofty precepts, elevated thoughts, and excellent rules for living a useful and upright life.

In this part of the work, Milton by a single word suggests ideas instead of stating them. Daphne brings to mind the love story of this beautiful follower of Diana and Apollo. Nepenthe recalls the tale of the drug which banishes sorrow and carries one to Nirvana. Cynic at once fixes Diogenes and his tub in the mind; and Erebus pictures the shades of the underworld.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE CASTLE OF COMUS

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS appears with his rabble, and THE LADY set in an enchanted chair: to whom he offers his glass; which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

THE WAVE OF A WAND

*Comus—Nay, Lady, sit. If I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.*

THE LADY DEFIES COMUS

Lady— Fool, do not boast.
 Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
 With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
 Thou has immanacled while Heaven sees good.

THE REFRESHING POWER OF CORDIAL JULEP

Comus—Why are you vexed, Lady? why do you frown?
 Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
 Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
 That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
 When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
 Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.
 And first behold this cordial julep here,
 That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
 With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed.
 Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
 In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
 It is of such power to stir up joy as this,
 To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
 Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
 And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
 For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
 But you invert the covenants of her trust,
 And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
 With that which you received on other terms,
 Scorning the unexempt condition
 By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
 Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
 That have been tired all day without repast,
 And timely rest have wanted. But, fair Virgin,
 This will restore all soon.

COMUS BRANDED A TRAITOR

Lady— 'T will not, false traitor!
 'T will not restore the truth and honesty
 That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
 Was this the cottage and the safe abode

Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
 These oughly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
 Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!
 Hast thou betrayed by credulous innocence
 With vizored falsehood and base forgery?
 And would'st thou seek again to trap me here
 With liquorish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
 Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
 I would not taste thy treasonous offer. None
 But such as are good men can give good things;
 And that which is not good is not delicious
 To a well-governed and wise appetite,

COMUS SATIRIZES THE STOICS

Comus—O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
 To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
 And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
 Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence!
 Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
 With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
 Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
 Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
 But all to please and sate the curious taste?
 And set to work millions of spinning worms,
 That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired
 silk
 To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
 Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
 She hatched the all-worshipped ore and precious
 gems,
 To store her children with. If all the world
 Should, in a pet of temperance, feed on pulse,
 Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
 The All-giver would be unthanked, would be un-
 praised.
 Not half his riches known, and yet despised;
 And we should serve him as a grudging master,
 As a penurious niggard of his wealth;
 And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,

Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
 And strangled with her waste fertility:
 The earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with
 plumes,
 The herds would over-multitude their lords;
 The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought
 diamonds
 Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
 And so bestud with stars, that they below
 Would grow inured to light, and come at last
 To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.

Passages to be Memorized

BEAUTY

Comus—List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozened
 With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
 Beauty is Nature's coin; must not be hoarded,
 But must be current; and the good thereof
 Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
 Unsavory in the enjoyment of itself.
 If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
 It withers on the stalk with languished head.
 Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
 In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
 Where most may wonder at the workmanship.
 It is for homely features to keep home;
 They had their name thence: coarse complexiöns
 And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply
 The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
 What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that
 Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
 There was another meaning in these gifts;
 Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE LADY LASHES THE JUGGLER

Lady—I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
 In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler

Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.
I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments
And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.

NATURE PROVIDES FOR THE TEMPERATE

Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance. She, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance.

AGAINST LUXURY AND GLUTTONY

If every just man that now pines with want
Had but a moderate and beseeeming share
Of that which lewdly-pampered Luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encumbered with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thanked,
His praise due paid: for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder.

THE SUN-CLAD POWER OF CHASTITY

Lady— To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of chastity
Fain would I something say;—yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion and high mystery
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.

COMUS NOT WORTH CONVINCING

Lady—Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced.

THE VEHEMENCE OF VIRTUE

Lady—Yet, should I try, the uncontrollèd worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence
That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.

COMUS IS DIPPED IN A COLD SHUDDERING DEW

Comus—She fables not. I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And, though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder and the chains of Erebus
To some of Saturn's crew.

COMUS AGAIN URGES THE LADY TO TASTE THE
DELIRIUM OF DELIGHT

Come, no more!

This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood.
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.

Unusual Words and Phrases

Daphne—a nymph beloved by Apollo. Being pursued by him and likely to be overtaken, she was at her prayer transformed into a laurel tree
corporal rind—bodily protection, body

immanacled—chained, handcuffed

cordial julep—heart reviving drink

Nepenthes—grief dispelling (opiate)

Thone—Thone's wife gave this mixture to Helen
(Jove-born) who mixed it into her husband's
Menelaus', wine

unexempt condition—law of human nature

aspects—countenances

visored—masked

liquorish—tempting to the appetite

Juno—queen of the gods, wife of Jupiter

Budge doctors of the Stoic fur—pedantic teachers of
the Stoic philosophy. "Budge fur" was lamb's
skin with the wool dressed outwards, worn to
decorate a scholastic gown. The Stoics believed
that virtue was the great end of living, and ac-
cordingly they were indifferent to both pleasure
and pain. Naturally Comus, with his love of
pleasure, would speak of the Stoics with con-
tempt

Cynic tub—reference to Diogenes, the Cynic phi-
losopher of Athens, who lived in a tub. The
Cynics were forerunners of the Stoics

sate—satisfy

hutched—hoarded, stored up

store—furnish, supply, provide

pet—fit

pulse—peas, beans, lentils

frieze—coarse woolen cloth (imported from Fries-
land)

cumbered—encumbered

plumes—wings

overmultitude—outnumber

inured—accustomed

cozened—cheated, beguiled, deluded

sorry grain—of poor color

sampler—a piece of needlework

tease—comb

vermeil-tinctured—vermilion (crimson) colored

pranked—decked out

bolt—sift, refine, set forth

enow—enough

dazzling fence—brilliant argumentation

uncontrolled—uncontrollable

rapt—enraptured

Erebus—place of darkness and gloom on the way
to Hades

Saturn—leader of the Titans, whom Zeus cast into
Erebus with his thunder and lightning

Canon laws of our foundation—fundamental regula-
tions of our society

lees (and settlings)—dregs

straight—straightway, immediately

Dialogue V

Story

Because the two brothers had not seized the wand of Comus, though they drove him back, they could not take their sister from the enchanted chair. The Attendant Spirit, however, remembers a water nymph named Sabrina, Goddess of the River, who, if invoked in song, will come to the aid of maidens in distress. He sings, praying for her assistance. She rises and in a song states she comes at his request. The Attendant Spirit becoming more specific implores her to free the Lady imprisoned

by the enchanter. Sabrina replies that her best duty is to help ensnared Chastity. Then requesting the sister to face her, she sprinkles drops upon that fair prisoner's body and finger tips. Next she smears the enchanted seat with gums of glutinous heat, breaks its spell and tells the Spirit she must ere morn hasten to Amphitrite's bower.

Analysis

This dialogue in showing Milton's belief in a Personal Providence is consistent with the story in Monologue I. Human aid could not give the Sister her liberty. She does escape, however, through the invocation of the messenger from Jove's Court who thus fulfills his mission.

Here Milton heaps up mountains of pleasing allusions. How different from all that have preceded! Meliboeus represents Spenser and his Faery Queene, Sabrina, Brute, Locrine and Guendolen call to mind page after page of the early history of England, while Oceanus, Tethys, Proteus, Nerues, Glaucus, Leucothea, Parthenope, Ligea, and Amphitrite clearly show that Milton was familiar with the lovely literature of the sea.

Passages to be Carefully Studied

THE ESCAPE OF COMUS

The BROTHERS rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground: his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The ATTENDANT SPIRIT comes in.

THE LADY IS STILL A PRISONER

Spirit—What! have you let the false enchanter scape?
 Oh, ye mistook; ye should have snatched his wand,
 And bound him fast. Without his rod reversed,
 And backward mutters of dissevering power,

We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed and motionless.

THE STORY OF SABRINA, GODDESS OF THE RIVER

There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn
stream,

Sabrina is her name, a Virgin pure ;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame, Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That stayed her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The water nymphs that in the bottom played,
Held up their pearlèd wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall,
Who, piteous of her woes, reared her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectared lavers strewed with asphodel,
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she revived,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made Goddess of the river. Still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling Elf delights to make,
Which she with precious vialèd liquors heals ;
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils,
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invoked in warbled song ;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need. This will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG TO SABRINA

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-drooping hair;
 Listen for dear honor's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake,
 Listen and save!

Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus,
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace;
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look
And the Carpathian wizard's hook;
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell;
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands;
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of Siren sweet;
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance;
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.
 Listen and save!

SABRINA ANNOUNCES HER PRESENCE

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
 My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,

That in the channel strays;
 Whilst from off the waters fleet
 Thus I set my printless feet
 O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
 That bends not as I tread.
 Gentle Swain, at thy request
 I am here!

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT IMPORES SABRINA TO AID
 THE LADY

Spirit—Goddess dear,
 We implore thy powerful hand
 To undue the charmed band
 Of true virgin here distressed
 Through the force and through the wile
 Of unblessed enchanter vile.

SABRINA'S BEST OFFICE

Sabrina—Shepherd, 't is my office best
 To help ensnarèd chastity.
 Brightest Lady, look on me.
 Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
 Drops that from my fountain pure
 I have kept of precious cure;
 Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
 Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
 Next this marble venomèd seat,
 Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,
 I touch with chaste palms moist and cold.
 Now the spell hath lost his hold;
 And I must haste ere morning hour
 To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT THANKS SABRINA

Spirit—Virgin, daughter of Locrine,
 Sprung of old Anchises' line,
 May thy brimmèd waves for this
 Their full tribute never miss
 From a thousand petty rills,
 That tumble down the snowy hills:

Summer drough or singèd air
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent bood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crowned
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT GUIDES THE LADY TO HER HOME

Spirit—Come, Lady; while Heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursèd place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound
Till we come to holier ground.
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide;
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wished presence, and beside
All the swains that there abide
With jigs and rural dance resort.
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer.
Come, let us haste; the stars grow high,
But Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

Unusual Words and Phrases

escape—escape

Meliboeus—a shepherd (in Vergil's Eclogue I and
other pastoral poetry)

Southest—truest

Severn—the Severn River ran not far to the east of
Ludlow Castle

Sabrina—the River Goddess after whom the Severn
River was named

Whilom—of old

Lochrine, Guendolen—Geoffrey of Monmouth relates
that Queen Guendolen, jealous of Sabrina and
her mother, Estrildis, raised an army and made
war upon Lochrine. Lochrine was defeated and
slain, and Guendolen, assuming the government,
commanded Estrildis and Sabrina to be cast
into the river, which was ever afterwards called
the Severn

Brute—Lochrine's father, Sabrina's grandfather

Nereus—the old man of the sea, the father of the
sea nymphs, or Nereids

lank—drooping

imbathe—to bathe in

nectared lavers—baths filled with nectar, the drink
of the gods

asphodel—flower found in Elysium

ambrosial—of heavenly fragrance

immortal change—change to immortality

urchin blasts—blighting influences of urchins, *i. e.*, of
evil spirits

vialled—contained in phials

amber drooping—with water drooping through and
from the amber-colored hair

Oceanus—God of the Ocean, which the ancients re-
garded as a "stream," flowing around the (flat)
earth

Neptune—God of the sea after Oceanus was over-
thrown

mace—trident

Tethys—wife of Oceanus

Carpathian wizard—Proteus, whose home was Carpathos in the Carpathian Sea

Triton—son of Neptune and Amphitrite, whose lower body was fish-like (scaly).

winding shell—Triton's horn, by which he would quiet or raise the waves

Glaucus—a Boeotian fisherman who was made a sea-god with prophetic powers

Leucothea—the "white goddess" was Ino, daughter of Cadmus. She leaped into the sea with her son Melicertes in her arms, who later became the sea-god Palaemon

Parthenope and Ligea—sirens

rushy-fringed—fringed with rushes

osier—water willow

dank—damp

azure sheen—azure brightness (gleam)

turkis—turkoise, turquoise

band—bond (of enchantment)

Amphitrite—wife of Neptune

Anchises—father of Aeneas, whose great grandson, Brutus, was Sabrina's grandfather

singed—scorched, scorching

tresses—foliage

beryl—name of a precious jewel

furlong—furrow long, length of a field (about 40 rods or 220 yards)

Songs

Story

In the first song the Attendant Spirit sings to the country dancers and tells them to make way for the dance of the courtiers; in the second lyric, he presents the two brothers and the sister to their father and mother and gives high praise to the children's triumph over sensuality and intemperance.

THE FIRST SONG

Spirit—Back, Shepherds, back! Enough your play
 Till next sunshine holiday.
 Here be, without duck or nod,
 Other trippings to be trod
 Of lighter toes, and such court guise
 As Mercury did first devise
 With the mincing Dryades
 On the lawns and on the leas.

THE SECOND SONG

Noble Lord and Lady bright,
 I have brought ye new delight.
 Here behold so goodly grown
 Three fair branches of your own.
 Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
 Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
 And sent them here through hard assays
 With a crown of deathless praise,
 To triumph in victorious dance
 O'er sensual folly and intemperance.

Unusual Words and Phrases

SONG NO. 1

duck or nod—forms of obeisance peculiar to country
 folk or servants
trippings—steps

court guise—courtly ways (wise) or mien
Mercury—or Hermes, the messenger of the gods had
winged ankles and was the ideal of agility and
grace
mincing—tripping with short steps
Dryades—wood nymphs
leas—meadows

SONG NO. 2

goodly—handsome, comely
timely—in good time
assays—trials

Epilogue

Story

Having completed his task, the Attendant Spirit states that he is going back to his heavenly home, Jove's court. In a passage of exquisite lyric sweetness, he pictures the realms of the gods and then in the loveliest lines of the poem adjures all who would follow him to love virtue.

Analysis

To students of Milton, this epilogue is a fountain of interest. It enables them to trace the development of the poet from the composer of lovely lyrics to the creator of elevated epics like *Paradise Lost*. Who, for instance, cannot see in this Epilogue the father of the following picture of Eden from Book IV of *Paradise Lost*, lines 223-268:

Southward through Eden went a river large
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
Passed underneath engulfed; for God had thrown

That mountain as his garden mold, high raised
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn
Rose a fresh fountain and with many a rill
Watered the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears;
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With many mazy error under pendant shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Imbrowned the noontide bowers. This was the place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and
balm;
Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste.
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed;
Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant. Meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,

Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on the Eternal Spring.

A second and greater interest, however, is the picture the last six lines give of this immortal champion of virtue. His life's creed is in the couplet:

Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

It is glorious to have such sublime faith as is here expressed; and it is still more glorious to live as Milton did and in his darkest hour have heaven send an Attendant Spirit to save him from the scaffold. At the Restoration, the House of Commons ordered that his books, the *Ikono-*clast and the *First Defense*, should be burned by the hangman and that he should be taken in custody. How this blind old man, this author of that fiery bombardment of kings, the *Image Breaker*, ever escaped the gallows, is still a mystery. But it is an historic fact that other Englishmen less objectionable to the Royalists than the poet were publicly hanged while this despiser of kings, this grand old lover of liberty, was set free.

Passages to be Studied

THE SPIRIT LAND

Spirit—To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky.
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;

The Graces, and the rosy-bosomed Hours
Thither all their bounties bring;
There eternal Summer dwells,
And West-winds, with musky wing,
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Then her purpled scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits the Assyrian queen.
But far above, in spangled sheen,
Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranced
After his wandering labors long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy: so Jove hath sworn.

Passage to be Memorized

Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue; she alone is free.
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

Unusual Words and Phrases

epilogizes—sings the Epilogue
clime—climate, region

Hesperus—brother of Atlas, had three daughters,

Aegle, Cynthia and Hesperia (see note to 393)
crisped—curled

spruce—dainty, gay, neatly dressed

Graces—the three Graces were Euphrosyne (the light-hearted one), Aglaia (the bright one), and Thalia (the blooming one)

Hours—goddesses of the seasons

musky—fragrant

cedarn—of cedar (trees)

nard and cassia—names of aromatic plants

Iris—goddess of the rainbow

purpled—embroidered

Adonis—a beautiful youth, loved by Venus, and slain by a wild boar, which he was hunting

Assyrian queen—Venus worshipped in Assyria as Astarte

spangled sheen—glittering radiance

Psyche—Psyche, the youngest of three daughters of a king, was loved by Cupid. As a punishment for distrusting him she was forced to wander from place to place and to endure many hardships. Finally, however, Cupid claimed her as his "eternal bride," and she was admitted with him among the gods

bowed welkin—arched dome of the sky

corners—horns

sphery chime—music of the spheres

MACAULAY'S LIFE OF JOHNSON
ANALYZED

MACAULAY'S LIFE OF JOHNSON ANALYZED

To Students of Macaulay's Life of Johnson:

You will find the work easy to understand if, in your study of it, you follow some plan like the following:

Part I, consisting of four paragraphs, gives an account of

- A. Johnson's parentage;
- B. His early life at Lichfield;
- C. His preparation for Pembroke College, Oxford;
- D. His three years' residence in Oxford.

Part II, comprising the next thirty paragraphs, explains the subjects listed below:

- A. Johnson's weaknesses set forth;
- B. His poverty;
- C. His attempt to make a living;
- D. His marriage;
- E. Johnson as a school master;
- F. Johnson seeks fame and fortune in London;
- G. His gratitude to those who helped him;
- H. His unattractive personality;
- I. Johnson as a reporter;
- J. Johnson becomes a poet as author of *London*;
- K. Johnson meets strange companions;
- L. Johnson becomes a biographer;

- M. He seeks a patron in Chesterfield;
- N. He write the *Vanity of Human Wishes*;
- O. He fails as a dramatist;
- P. He attempts essay writing;
- Q. He loses his wife;
- R. He publishes his dictionary and becomes famous;
- S. Wealth escapes him;
- T. He brings out a second series of essays;
- U. He becomes a novelist.

Part III, picturing Johnson flattered, a literary lion, in affluence, with London at his feet, in the remaining seventeen paragraphs, tells of

- A. His pension;
- B. His ease and comfort;
- C. His indolence;
- D. His edition of Shakespeare;
- E. The famous Literary Club;
- F. His enjoyable life with the Thrales, contrasted with his home life;
- G. His journey to the Hebrides;
- H. Anecdotes of his Scotch tour;
- I. His becoming a tory pamphleteer;
- J. His "*The Lives of the Poets*";
- K. His quarrel with Mrs. Thrale;
- L. His death;
- M. Macaulay's opinion of him.

PART I

JOHNSON'S EARLY LIFE

Passages to be Carefully Studied

A. SAMUEL JOHNSON, one of the most eminent English writers of the eighteenth century, was the son of Michael Johnson, who was, at the beginning of that century, a magistrate of Lichfield, and a bookseller of great note in the midland counties.

At his house, a house which is still pointed out to every traveller who visits Lichfield, Samuel was born on the 18th of September, 1709. In the child, the physical, intellectual, and moral peculiarities which afterwards distinguished the man were plainly discernible; great muscular strength accompanied by much awkwardness and many infirmities; great quickness of parts, with a morbid propensity to sloth and procrastination; a kind and generous heart, with a gloomy and irritable temper. He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint, which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular, were distorted by his malady. His cheeks were deeply scarred. He lost for a time the sight of one eye; and he saw but very imperfectly with the other. But the force of his mind overcame every impediment. Indolent as he was, he acquired knowledge with such ease and rapidity that at every school to which he was sent he was soon the best scholar. From sixteen to eighteen he resided at home, and was left to his own devices. He learned much at this time, though his studies were without guidance and without plan. He ransacked his father's shelves, dipped into a multitude of books, read what was interesting, and passed over what was dull. An ordinary lad would have acquired little or no useful knowledge in such a way: but much that was dull to ordinary lads was inter-

NOTE: The paragraphs of the essays are labelled with letters; the author's comments are not lettered.

esting to Samuel. He read little Greek; for his proficiency in that language was not such that he could take much pleasure in the masters of Attic poetry and eloquence. But he had left school a good Latinist; and he soon acquired, in the large and miscellaneous library of which he now had the command, an extensive knowledge of Latin literature. That Augustan delicacy of taste which is the boast of the great public schools of England he never possessed. But he was early familiar with some classical writers who were quite unknown to the best scholars in the sixth form at Eton. He was peculiarly attracted by the works of the great restorers of learning. Once, while searching for some apples, he found a huge folio volume of Petrarch's works. The name excited his curiosity; and he eagerly devoured hundreds of pages. Indeed, the diction and versification of his own Latin compositions show that he had paid at least as much attention to modern copies from the antique as to the original models.

SAMUEL ENTERS COLLEGE IN SPITE OF POVERTY

B. While he was thus irregularly educating himself, his family was sinking into hopeless poverty. Old Michael Johnson was much better qualified to pore upon books, and to talk about them, than to trade in them. His business declined; his debts increased; it was with difficulty that the daily expenses of his household were defrayed. It was out of his power to support his son at either university; but a wealthy neighbour offered assistance; and, in reliance on promises which proved to be of very little value, Samuel was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. When the young scholar presented himself to the rulers of that society, they were amazed not more by his ungainly figure and eccentric manners than by the quantity of extensive and curious information which he had picked up during many months of desultory but not unprofitable study. On the first day of his residence he surprised his teachers by quoting Macrobius; and one of the most learned among them declared that he had never known a freshman of equal attainments.

JOHNSON'S THREE PICTURESQUE YEARS AT OXFORD

C. At Oxford, Johnson resided during about three years. He was poor, even to raggedness; and his appearance excited a mirth and a pity which were equally intolerable to his haughty spirit. He was driven from the quadrangle of Christ Church by the sneering looks which the members of that aristocratical society cast at the holes in his shoes. Some charitable person placed a new pair at his door; but he spurned them away in a fury. Distress made him, not servile, but reckless and ungovernable. No opulent gentleman commoner, panting for one-and-twenty, could have treated the academical authorities with more gross disrespect. The needy scholar was generally to be seen under the gate of Pembroke, a gate now adorned with his effigy, haranguing a circle of lads, over whom, in spite of his tattered gown and dirty linen, his wit and audacity gave him an undisputed ascendancy. In every mutiny against the discipline of the college he was the ringleader. Much was pardoned, however, to a youth so highly distinguished by abilities and acquirements. He had early made himself known by turning Pope's Messiah into Latin verse. The style and rhythm, indeed, were not exactly Virgilian; but the translation found many admirers, and was read with pleasure by Pope himself.

This mournful truth is everywhere confessed
Slow rises worth by poverty depressed.

—*Johnson's London.*

D. The time drew near at which Johnson would, in the ordinary course of things, have become a Bachelor of Arts: but he was at the end of his resources. Those promises of support on which he had relied had not been kept. His family could do nothing for him. His debts to Oxford tradesmen were small indeed, yet larger than he could pay. In the autumn of 1731, he was under the necessity of quitting the university without a degree. In the following winter his father died. The old man left but a pittance; and of that pittance almost the whole was

appropriated to the support of his widow. The property to which Samuel succeeded amounted to no more than twenty pounds.

ALLUSIONS AND UNUSUAL PHRASES

Jacobite—a follower of James II.

Attic eloquence—eloquence found in the works of such great Athenians as Lysias, Pericles, Phocion, Euripides, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Demosthenes.

Augustan delicacy of taste—the style of Virgil, Horace and Livy who flourished in the reign of Augustus Caesar.

Petrarch—an Italian lyric poet, 1304-1374.

Macrobius—a Latin grammarian, 400 A. D.

PART II

THIRTY YEARS OF POVERTY

The next thirty paragraphs paint a graphic picture of this great man's thirty years' struggle with poverty. Besides giving a vivid account of Johnson as an usher at a grammar school, Johnson as a companion in the house of a country gentleman, Johnson as a literary drudge, Johnson in love and Johnson as a schoolmaster, Macaulay is very much at home, as he tells how Johnson under handicaps big enough to conquer strong hearts, struggled on and produced during these dark years such works as "London," "The Life of Savage," "The Vanity of Human Wishes," "Irene," "The Rambler," "The Dictionary" and "Rasselas."

For the student this part of the essay is an excellent lesson in emulation. He cannot read the struggles of

this extraordinary man without seeing a silver lining in every cloud, without getting a gleam of the star of hope.

The long list of faults set forth in paragraph A generally causes the young student to form an unfavorable impression of Dr. Johnson. As usual, a love for color and his desire to paint the old philosopher as a contemporary instead of a man sixty years in his grave, has led Macaulay to emphasize trivial defects, mistakes and frailties. The essayist mars his effort by continually exaggerating the surface blemishes of Johnson without touching the man's remarkable mind. The critic is always great when painting exteriors. He is successful in portraying such heroes as the Pitts and Clive, who were men on horseback—the products of war—men whose simple, popular qualities were so obvious that he easily understood them. Johnson, a philosopher and student, on the other hand, is too complex, independent and moral for the superficial critic who judges men by their coats to comprehend.

In studying Johnson do not let this attempt of Macaulay to caricature a benefactor of mankind as a scarecrow weaken your respect for Dr. Johnson. If it seems strange that one so learned, so positive, so illustrious and so philosophical made so many mistakes, remember that no man is perfect. Cherish the good he did, and learn a lesson in tolerance by letting his frailties sleep.

A. His life, during the thirty years which followed, was one hard struggle with poverty. The misery of that struggle needed no aggravation, but was aggravated by the sufferings of an unsound body and an unsound mind. Before the young man left the university, his hereditary malady had broken forth in a singularly cruel form. He had become an incurable hypochondriac. He said long after that he had been mad all his life, or at least not perfectly sane; and, in truth, eccentricities less strange

than his have often been thought grounds sufficient for absolving felons, and not setting aside wills. His grimaces, his gestures, his mutterings, sometimes diverted and sometimes terrified people who did not know him. At a dinner table he would, in a fit of absence, stoop down and twitch off a lady's shoe. He would amaze a drawing-room by suddenly ejaculating a clause of the Lord's Prayer. He would conceive an unintelligible aversion to a particular alley, and perform a great circuit rather than see the hateful place. He would set his heart on touching every post in the streets through which he walked. If by any chance he missed a post, he would go back a hundred yards and repair the omission. Under the influence of his disease, his senses became morbidly torpid, and his imagination morbidly active. At one time he would stand poring on the town clock without being able to tell the hour. At another, he would distinctly hear his mother, who was many miles off, calling him by his name. But this was not the worst. A deep melancholy took possession of him, and gave a dark tinge to all his views of human nature and of human destiny. Such wretchedness as he endured has driven many men to shoot themselves or drown themselves. But he was under no temptation to commit suicide. He was sick of life; but he was afraid of death; and he shuddered at every sight or sound which reminded him of the inevitable hour. In religion he found but little comfort during his long and frequent fits of dejection; for his religion partook of his own character. The light from heaven shone on him indeed, but not in a direct line, or with its own pure splendour. The rays had to struggle through a disturbing medium; they reached him refracted, dulled and discoloured by the thick gloom which had settled on his soul; and, though they might be sufficiently clear to guide him, were too dim to cheer him.

JOHNSON AT TWENTY-TWO

B. With such infirmities of body and mind, this celebrated man was left, at two-and-twenty, to fight his way through the world. He remained during about five years

in the midland counties. At Lichfield, his birthplace and his early home, he had inherited some friends and acquired others. He was kindly noticed by Henry Hervey, a gay officer of noble family, who happened to be quartered there. Gilbert Walmesley, registrar of the ecclesiastical court of the diocese, a man of distinguished parts, learning, and knowledge of the world, did himself honour by patronising the young adventurer, whose repulsive person, unpolished manners, and squalid garb moved many of the petty aristocracy of the neighbourhood to laughter or to disgust. At Lichfield, however, Johnson could find no way of earning a livelihood. He became usher of a grammar school in Leicestershire; he resided as a humble companion in the house of a country gentleman; but a life of dependence was insupportable to his haughty spirit. He repaired to Birmingham, and there earned a few guineas by literary drudgery. In that town he printed a translation, little noticed at the time, and long forgotten, of a Latin book about Abyssinia. He then put forth proposals for publishing by subscription the poems of Politian, with notes containing a history of modern Latin verse: but subscriptions did not come in; and the volume never appeared.

Paragraph C on Johnson's marriage to Mrs. Porter is probably careless conjecture. That Johnson was not so stupid as to be taken in by a painted petticoat is amply proven by the strong current of common sense running through all his works. It is difficult to believe that the man who wrote the frigid lines, *To Stella*, could be fascinated by a lady as coarse and crude as Johnson's wife is pictured by Macaulay.

TO STELLA

1. Not the soft sighs of vernal gales,
The fragrance of the flowery vales,
The murmurs of the crystal rill,
The vocal grove, the verdant hill;

Not all their charms, though all unite,
Can touch my bosom with delight.

2. Not all the gems on India's shore
Not all Peru's unbounded store
Not all the power, nor all the fame
That heroes, kings or poets claim;
Nor knowledge, which the learn'd approve
To form one wish my soul can move.
3. Yet Nature's charms allure my eyes.
And knowledge, wealth and fame I prize
Fame, wealth and knowledge I obtain,
Nor seek I Nature's charms in vain—
In lovely Stella all combine
And lovely Stella! Thou art mine.

C. While leading this vagrant and miserable life, Johnson fell in love. The object of his passion was Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, a widow who had children as old as himself. To ordinary spectators, the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman, painted half an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colours, and fond of exhibiting provincial airs and graces which were not exactly those of the Queensberrys and Lepels. To Johnson, however, whose passions were strong, whose eyesight was too weak to distinguish ceruse from natural bloom, and who had seldom or never been in the same room with a woman of real fashion, his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. That his admiration was unfeigned cannot be doubted; for she was as poor as himself. She accepted, with a readiness which did her little honour, the addresses of a suitor who might have been her son. The marriage, however, in spite of occasional wranglings, proved happier than might have been expected. The lover continued to be under the illusions of the wedding-day till the lady died in her sixty-fourth year. On her monument he placed an inscription extolling the charms of her person and of her manners; and when, long after her decease, he had occasion to mention her, he exclaimed, with a tenderness half ludicrous, half pathetic, "Pretty creature!"

JOHNSON AS A SCHOOLMASTER

In view of the fact that Johnson had patience enough to labour seven years at his dictionary it seems odd that Macaulay should call his school an ogre's den.

D. His marriage made it necessary for him to exert himself more strenuously than he had hitherto done. He took a house in the neighbourhood of his native town, and advertised for pupils. But eighteen months passed away; and only three pupils came to his academy. Indeed, his appearance was so strange, and his temper so violent, that his schoolroom must have resembled an ogre's den. Nor was the tawdry painted grandmother whom he called his Titty well qualified to make provision for the comfort of young gentlemen. David Garrick, who was one of the pupils, used, many years later, to throw the best company of London into convulsions of laughter by mimicking the endearments of this extraordinary pair.

JOHNSON GOES TO LONDON

E. At length Johnson, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, determined to seek his fortune in the capital as a literary adventurer. He set out with a few guineas, three acts of the tragedy of Irene in manuscript, and two or three letters of introduction from his friend Walmesley.

JOHNSON IN LITERARY LONDON

Paragraph F is an excellent survey of the state of literature between the close of the classical age, 1750, and the opening of the romantic period, 1800.

F. Never, since literature became a calling in England, had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London. In the preceding generation a writer of eminent merit was sure to be munificently rewarded by the government. The least that he could expect was a pension or a sinecure place; and, if he showed any aptitude for politics, he might

hope to be a member of parliament, a lord of the treasury, an ambassador, a secretary of state. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name several writers of the nineteenth century of whom the least successful has received forty thousand pounds from the booksellers. But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity. Literature had ceased to flourish under the patronage of the great, and had not begun to flourish under the patronage of the public. One man of letters, indeed, Pope, had acquired by his pen what was then considered as a handsome fortune, and lived on a footing of equality with nobles and ministers of state. But this was a solitary exception. Even an author whose reputation was established, and whose works were popular, such an author as Thomson, whose *Seasons* were in every library, such an author as Fielding, whose *Pasquin* had had a greater run than any drama since *The Beggar's Opera*, was sometimes glad to obtain, by pawning his best coat, the means of dining on tripe at a cookshop underground, where he could wipe his hands, after his greasy meal, on the back of a Newfoundland dog. It is easy, therefore, to imagine what humiliations and privations must have awaited the novice who had still to earn a name. One of the publishers to whom Johnson applied for employment measured with a scornful eye that athletic though uncouth frame, and exclaimed, "You had better get a porter's knot, and carry trunks." Nor was the advice bad; for a porter was likely to be as plentifully fed, and as comfortably lodged, as a poet.

JOHNSON'S GRATITUDE TO HENRY HERVEY

G. Some time appears to have elapsed before Johnson was able to form any literary connection from which he could expect more than bread for the day which was passing over him. He never forgot the generosity with which Hervey, who was now residing in London, relieved his wants during this time of trial. "Harry Hervey," said the old philosopser many years later, "was a vicious man; but he was very kind to me. If you call a dog

Hervey I shall love him." At Hervey's table Johnson sometimes enjoyed feasts which were made more agreeable by contrast. But in general he dined, and thought that he dined well, on sixpenny worth of meat, and a pennyworth of bread, at an alehouse near Drury Lane.

It is difficult to understand why Macaulay is always referring with contempt to Johnson's clothing, linen and his manner of eating, unless he felt posterity would be more interested in a dissertation on etiquette than in the man's character. No one expects perfection from a poor author. Yet his biographer takes delight in repeating over and over again the fact that Johnson's clothes were not new, that his linen was not as white as snow and that his table manners were disgusting. This surely indicates poor taste on the part of the critic who, although he has in many instances Boswell's narrative to back him up, could surely have found in Boswell's three large volumes sides of Johnson that are far more interesting.

JOHNSON IN SHABBY ATTIRE

H. The effect of the privations and sufferings which he endured at this time was discernible to the last in his temper and his deportment. His manners had never been courtly. They now became almost savage. Being frequently under the necessity of wearing shabby coats and dirty shirts, he became a confirmed sloven. Being often very hungry when he sat down to his meals, he contracted a habit of eating with ravenous greediness. Even to the end of his life, and even at the tables of the great, the sight of food affected him as it affects wild beasts and birds of prey. His taste in cookery, formed in subterranean ordinaries and alamode beefshops, was far from delicate. Whenever he was so fortunate as to have near him a hare that had been kept too long, or a meat pie made with rancid butter, he gorged himself with such violence that his veins swelled, and the moisture broke out on his forehead. The affronts which his poverty em-

boldened stupid and low-minded men to offer to him would have broken a mean spirit into sycophancy, but made him rude even to ferocity. Unhappily the insolence which, while it was defensive, was pardonable, and in some sense respectable, accompanied him into societies where he was treated with courtesy and kindness. He was repeatedly provoked into striking those who had taken liberties with him. All the sufferers, however, were wise enough to abstain from talking about their beatings, except Osborne, the most rapacious and brutal of book-sellers, who proclaimed everywhere that he had been knocked down by the huge fellow whom he had hired to puff the Harleian Library.

JOHNSON WAS ONE OF THE FIRST REPORTERS

I. About a year after Johnson had begun to reside in London, he was fortunate enough to obtain regular employment from Cave, an enterprising and intelligent book-seller, who was proprietor and editor of *The Gentleman's Magazine*. That journal, just entering on the ninth year of its long existence, was the only periodical work in the kingdom which then had what would now be called a large circulation. It was, indeed, the chief source of parliamentary intelligence. It was not then safe, even during a recess, to publish an account of the proceedings of either House without some disguise. Cave, however, ventured to entertain his readers with what he called "Reports of the Debates of the Senate of Lilliput." France was Blefuscu: London was Mildendo: pounds were sprugs: the Duke of Newcastle was the Nardac Secretary of State: Lord Hardwicke was the Hurgo Hickrad: and William Pulteney was Wingul Pulnub. To write the speeches was, during several years, the business of Johnson. He was generally furnished with notes, meagre indeed, and inaccurate, of what had been said; but sometimes he had to find arguments and eloquence both for the ministry and for the opposition. He was himself a Tory, not from rational conviction—for his serious opinion was that one form of government was just as good or as bad as another—but from mere pas-

sion, such as inflamed the Capulets against the Montagues, or the Blues of the Roman circus against the Greens. In his infancy he had heard so much talk about the villainies of the Whigs, and the dangers of the Church, that he had become a furious partisan when he could scarcely speak. Before he was three he had insisted on being taken to hear Sacheverell preach at Lichfield Cathedral, and had listened to the sermon with as much respect, and probably with as much intelligence, as any Staffordshire squire in the congregation. The work which had been begun in the nursery had been completed by the university. Oxford, when Johnson resided there, was the most Jacobitical place in England; and Pembroke was one of the most Jacobitical colleges in Oxford. The prejudices which he brought up to London were scarcely less absurd than those of his own Tom Tempest. Charles II. and James II. were two of the best kings that ever reigned. Laud, a poor creature who never did, said, or wrote anything indicating more than the ordinary capacity of an old woman, was a prodigy of parts and learning over whose tomb Art and Genius still continued to weep. Hampden deserved no more honourable name than that of "the zealot of rebellion." Even the ship money, condemned not less decidedly by Falkland and Clarendon than by the bitterest Roundheads, Johnson would not pronounce to have been an unconstitutional impost. Under a government, the mildest that had ever been known in the world—under a government which allowed to the people an unprecedented liberty of speech and action—he fancied that he was a slave; he assailed the ministry with obloquy which refuted itself, and regretted the lost freedom and happiness of those golden days in which a writer who had taken but one-tenth part of the license allowed to him would have been pilloried, mangled with the shears, whipped at the cart's tail, and flung into a noisome dungeon to die. He hated dissenters and stock-jobbers, the excise and the army, septennial parliaments, and continental connections. He long had an aversion to the Scotch, an aversion of which he could not remember the commencement, but which, he owned, had probably

originated in his abhorrence of the conduct of the nation during the Great Rebellion. It is easy to guess in what manner debates on great party questions were likely to be reported by a man whose judgment was so much disordered by party spirit. A show of fairness was indeed necessary to the prosperity of the Magazine. But Johnson long afterwards owned that, though he had saved appearances, he had taken care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it; and, in fact, every passage which has lived, every passage which bears the marks of his higher faculties, is put into the mouth of some member of the opposition.

“LONDON,” HIS FIRST POEM

Johnson published “London” anonymously and became famous. Macaulay declares that it is a stately and vigorous poem; that it was a complete success; that a second edition was required within a week; that some critics proclaimed Johnson as a satirist superior to Pope, and that on account of it Pope tried, though unsuccessfully, to obtain for Johnson an academic degree and the mastership of a school.

J. A few weeks after Johnson had entered on these obscure labours, he published a work which at once placed him high among the writers of his age. It is probable that what he had suffered during his first year in London had often reminded him of some parts of that noble poem in which Juvenal had described the misery and degradation of a needy man of letters, lodged among the pigeons’ nests in the tottering garrets which overhung the streets of Rome. Pope’s admirable imitations of Horace’s Satires and Epistles had recently appeared, were in every hand, and were by many readers thought superior to the originals. What Pope had done for Horace, Johnson aspired to do for Juvenal. The enterprise was bold, and yet judicious. For between Johnson and Juvenal there was much in common, much more certainly than between Pope and Horace.

Johnson's *London* appeared without his name in May 1738. He received only ten guineas for this stately and vigorous poem: but the sale was rapid, and the success complete. A second edition was required within a week. Those small critics who are always desirous to lower established reputations ran about proclaiming that the anonymous satirist was superior to Pope in Pope's own peculiar department of literature. It ought to be remembered, to the honour of Pope, that he joined heartily in the applause with which the appearance of a rival genius was welcomed. He made inquiries about the author of *London*. Such a man, he said, could not long be concealed. The name was soon discovered; and Pope, with great kindness, exerted himself to obtain an academical degree and the mastership of a grammar school for the poor young poet. The attempt failed, and Johnson remained a bookseller's hack.

JOHNSON'S STRANGE COMPANIONS

K. It does not appear that these two men, the most eminent writer of the generation which was going out, and the most eminent writer of the generation which was coming in, ever saw each other. They lived in very different circles, one surrounded by dukes and earls, the other by starving pamphleteers and indexmakers. Among Johnson's associates at this time may be mentioned Boyse, who, when his shirts were pledged, scrawled Latin verses sitting up in bed with his arms through two holes in his blanket, who composed very respectable sacred poetry when he was sober, and who was at last run over by a hackney coach when he was drunk; Hoole, surnamed the metaphysical tailor, who instead of attending to his measures, used to trace geometrical diagrams on the board where he sate cross-legged; and the penitent impostor, George Psalmanazar, who, after poring all day, in a humble lodging, on the folios of Jewish rabbis and Christian fathers, indulged himself at night with literary and theological conversation at an alehouse in the city. But the most remarkable of the persons with whom at this time Johnson consorted was Richard Savage, an earl's

son, a shoemaker's apprentice, who had seen life in all its forms, who had feasted among blue ribands in Saint James's Square, and had lain with fifty pounds' weight of iron on his legs in the condemned ward of Newgate. This man had, after many vicissitudes of fortune, sunk at last into abject and hopeless poverty. His pen had failed him. His patrons had been taken away by death, or estranged by the riotous profusion with which he squandered their bounty, and the ungrateful insolence with which he rejected their advice. He now lived by begging. He dined on venison and champagne whenever he had been so fortunate as to borrow a guinea. If his questing had been unsuccessful, he appeased the rage of hunger with some scraps of broken meat, and lay down to rest under the Piazza of Covent Garden in warm weather, and, in cold weather, as near as he could get to the furnace of a glass house. Yet, in his misery, he was still an agreeable companion. He had an inexhaustible store of anecdotes about that gay and brilliant world from which he was now an outcast. He had observed the great men of both parties in hours of careless relaxation, had seen the leaders of opposition without the mask of patriotism, and had heard the prime minister roar with laughter and tell stories not over decent. During some months Savage lived in the closest familiarity with Johnson; and then the friends parted, not without tears. Johnson remained in London to drudge for Cave. Savage went to the West of England, lived there as he had lived everywhere, and, in 1743, died, penniless and heart-broken, in Bristol gaol.

JOHNSON'S FIRST BIOGRAPHY WAS THE LIFE OF SAVAGE

Macaulay states that it was widely different from the catchpenny lives of eminent men which came from Grub Street; that the style was deficient in ease and variety; that the writer was too fond of words derived from the Latin; that with all its faults it was a masterpiece; and that no finer specimen of literary biography existed in any language, living or dead.

L. Soon after his death, while the public curiosity was strongly excited about his extraordinary character, and his not less extraordinary adventures, a life of him appeared widely different from the catchpenny lives of eminent men which were then a staple article of manufacture in Grub Street. The style was indeed deficient in ease and variety; and the writer was evidently too partial to the Latin element of our language. But the little work, with all its faults, was a masterpiece. No finer specimen of literary biography existed in any language, living or dead; and a discerning critic might have confidently predicted that the author was destined to be the founder of a new school of English eloquence.

The life of Savage was anonymous; but it was well known in literary circles that Johnson was the writer. During the three years which followed, he produced no important work; but he was not, and indeed could not be, idle. The fame of his abilities and learning continued to grow. Warburton pronounced him a man of parts and genius; and the praise of Warburton was then no light thing. Such was Johnson's reputation that, in 1747, several eminent booksellers combined to employ him in the arduous work of preparing a Dictionary of the English language, in two folio volumes. The sum which they agreed to pay him was only fifteen hundred guineas; and out of this sum he had to pay several poor men of letters who assisted him in the humbler parts of his task.

JOHNSON MEETS CHESTERFIELD

Macaulay bases part of his caricature of Johnson as a dog, scarecrow and cormorant upon the following passage of Letter 212 in Chesterfield's letters to his son:

There is a man whose moral character, deep learning, and superior parts I acknowledge, admire and respect; but whom it is so impossible for me to love that I am almost in a fever whenever I am in his company. * * * He throws anywhere but down his throat whatever he means to drink, and only

mangles what he means to carve. * * * Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him is to consider him a respectable Hottentot.

It has been proven that Chesterfield was referring not to Johnson but to George Lyttleton, a good, but very ungentlemanly author.

M. The prospectus of the Dictionary he addressed to the Earl of Chesterfield. Chesterfield had long been celebrated for the politeness of his manners, the brilliancy of his wit, and the delicacy of his taste. He was acknowledged to be the finest speaker in the House of Lords. He had recently governed Ireland, at a momentous conjuncture, with eminent firmness, wisdom, and humanity; and he had since become Secretary of State. He received Johnson's homage with the most winning affability, and requited it with a few guineas, bestowed doubtless in a very graceful manner, but was by no means desirous to see all his carpets blackened with the London mud, and his soups and wines thrown to right and left over the gowns of fine ladies and the waistcoats of fine gentlemen, by an absent, awkward scholar, who gave strange starts and uttered strange growls, who dressed like a scarecrow, and ate like a cormorant. During some time Johnson continued to call on his patron, but after being repeatedly told by the porter that his lordship was not at home, took the hint, and ceased to present himself at the inhospitable door.

The Vanity of Human Wishes adds to Johnson's growing fame. Macaulay praises it as follows:

1. It was an excellent imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal.
2. It was so good that he could not say which was the better.
3. The couplets in which the fall of Wolsey is described by Johnson are feeble when compared with

the wonderful lines in Juvenal, which bring before us all Rome in tumult on the day of the fall of Sejanus.

4. In the concluding passage Johnson has not made the most of his advantages and has fallen far short of Juvenal's masterpiece.

5. Juvenal's Hannibal is not so great as Johnson's Charles, and Johnson's vigorous enumeration of the miseries of a literary life is superior to Juvenal's lamentation over the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero.

N. Johnson had flattered himself that he should have completed his Dictionary by the end of 1750; but it was not till 1755 that he at length gave his huge volumes to the world. During the seven years which he passed in the drudgery of penning definitions and marking quotations for transcription, he sought for relaxation in literary labour of a more agreeable kind. In 1749 he published the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, an excellent imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. It is in truth not easy to say whether the palm belongs to the ancient or to the modern poet. The couplets in which the fall of Wolsey is described, though lofty and sonorous, are feeble when compared with the wonderful lines which bring before us all Rome in tumult on the day of the fall of Sejanus, the laurels on the doorposts, the white bull stalking towards the Capitol, the statues rolling down from their pedestals, the flatterers of the disgraced minister running to see him dragged with a hook through the streets, and to have a kick at his carcase before it is hurled into the Tiber. It must be owned too that in the concluding passage the Christian moralist has not made the most of his advantages, and has fallen decidedly short of the sublimity of his pagan model. On the other hand, Juvenal's Hannibal must yield to Johnson's Charles; and Johnson's vigorous and pathetic enumeration of the miseries of a literary life must be allowed to be superior to Juvenal's lamentation over the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero.

For the copyright of the *Vanity of Human Wishes* Johnson received only fifteen guineas.

The famous lines so emblematic of Johnson's own life

There mark what ills the scholar's life assail
Toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail.

are in the foregoing poem.

AS A DRAMATIST JOHNSON IS UNSUCCESSFUL

Irene was refused when he offered it at Drury Lane Theatre (1737). Twelve years later Garrick produced it to assist Johnson. It was performed only nine times. To make it suitable for the stage, Garrick altered it so much that he displeased Johnson. The play, according to Macaulay, consisted of five acts of monotonous declamation. Johnson received about \$1,500 from its production.

O. A few days after the publication of this poem, his tragedy, begun many years before, was brought on the stage. His pupil, David Garrick, had, in 1741, made his appearance on a humble stage in Goodman's Fields, had at once risen to the first place among actors, and was now, after several years of almost uninterrupted success, manager of Drury Lane Theatre. The relation between him and his old preceptor was of a very singular kind. They repelled each other strongly, and yet attracted each other strongly. Nature had made them of very different clay; and circumstances had full brought out the natural peculiarities of both. Sudden prosperity had turned Garrick's head. Continued adversity had soured Johnson's temper. Johnson saw with more envy than became so great a man the villa, the plate, the china, the Brussels carpet, which the little mimic had got by repeating, with grimaces and gesticulations, what wiser men had written; and the exquisitely sensitive vanity of Garrick was galled by the thought that, while all the rest of the world was applauding him, he could obtain from one morose cynic, whose opinion it was impossible to despise, scarcely any compliment not acidulated with scorn. Yet the two Lichfield men had so many early recollections in common and

sympathised with each other on so many points on which they sympathised with nobody else in the vast population of the capital, that, though the master was often provoked by the monkey-like impertience of the pupil, and the pupil by the bearish rudeness of the master, they remained friends till they were parted by death. Garrick now brought *Irene* out, with alterations sufficient to displease the author, yet not sufficient to make the piece pleasing to the audience. The public, however, listened with little emotion, but with much civility, to five acts of monotonous declamation. After nine representations the play was withdrawn. It is, indeed, altogether unsuited to the stage, and, even when perused in the closet, will be found hardly worthy of the author. He had not the slightest notion of what blank verse should be. A change in the last syllable of every other line would make the versification of the *Vanity of Human Wishes* closely resemble the versification of *Irene*. The poet, however, cleared, by his benefit nights, and by the sale of the copyright of his tragedy, about three hundred pounds, then a great sum in his estimation.

WITH THE PUBLICATION OF HIS RAMBLER, JOHNSON
BECOMES AN ESSAYIST

Of Johnson as an essayist, Macaulay said,

that his diction was too monotonous, that it was too artificial, that it was now and then turgid even to absurdity, that his observations on morals and manners were acute, that his language was precise and brilliant, that some of the passages were magnificently eloquent, and that posterity prefers the essays in the *Spectator* to those of the *Rambler*.

P. About a year after the representation of *Irene*, he began to publish a series of short essays on morals, manners, and literature. This species of composition had been brought into fashion by the success of the *Tatler*, and by the still more brilliant success of the *Spectator*. A crowd of small writers had vainly attempted to rival

Addison. The Lay Monastery, the Censor, the Free-thinker, the Plain Dealer, the Champion, and other works of the same kind, had had their short day. None of them had obtained a permanent place in our literature; and they are now to be found only in the libraries of the curious. At length Johnson undertook the adventure in which so many aspirants had failed. In the thirty-sixth year after the appearance of the last number of the Spectator appeared the first number of the Rambler. From March 1750 to March 1752, this paper continued to come out every Tuesday and Saturday.

From the first the Rambler was enthusiastically admired by a few eminent men. Richardson, when only five numbers had appeared, pronounced it equal, if not superior, to the Spectator. Young and Hartley expressed their approbation not less warmly. Bubb Dodington, among whose many faults indifference to the claims of genius and learning cannot be reckoned, solicited the acquaintance of the writer. In consequence probably of the good offices of Dodington, who was then the confidential adviser of Prince Frederic, two of His Royal Highness's gentlemen carried a gracious message to the printing office, and ordered seven copies for Leicester House. But these overtures seem to have been very coldly received. Johnson had had enough of the patronage of the great to last him all his life, and was not disposed to haunt any other door as he had haunted the door of Chesterfield.

By the public the Rambler was at first very coldly received. Though the price of a number was only two-pence, the sale did not amount to five hundred. The profits were therefore very small. But as soon as the flying leaves were collected and reprinted they became popular. The author lived to see thirteen thousand copies spread over England alone. Separate editions were published for the Scotch and Irish markets. A large party pronounced the style perfect, so absolutely perfect that in some essays it would be impossible for the writer himself to alter a single word for the better. Another party, not less numerous, vehemently accused him of having cor-

rupted the purity of the English tongue. The best critics admitted that his diction was too monotonous, too obviously artificial, and now and then turgid even to absurdity. But they did justice to the acuteness of his observations on morals and manners, to the constant precision and frequent brilliancy of his language, to the weighty and magnificent eloquence of many serious passages, and to the solemn yet pleasing humor of some of the lighter papers. On the question of precedence between Addison and Johnson, a question which, seventy years ago, was much disputed, posterity has pronounced a decision from which there is no appeal. Sir Roger, his chaplain and his butler, Will Wimble and Will Honeycomb, the Vision of Mirza, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Everlasting Club, the Dunmow Flitch, the Loves of Hilpah and Shalum, the Visit to the Exchange, and the Visit to the Abbey, are known to everybody. But many men and women, even of highly cultivated minds, are unacquainted with Squire Bluster and Mrs. Busy, Quisquilius and Venustulus, the Allegory of Wit and Learning, the Chronicle of the Revolutions of a Garret, and the sad fate of Aningait and Ajut.

THE DEATH OF MRS. JOHNSON

Again, in paragraph 26, Macaulay shows what a superficial critic he was. Even in death, he cannot refrain from poking fun at a lady whom a much greater man than he thought the best of womankind. Such criticism is almost valueless.

Q. The last Rambler was written in a sad and gloomy hour. Mrs. Johnson had been given over by the physicians. Three days later she died. She left her husband almost broken-hearted. Many people had been surprised to see a man of his genius and learning stooping to every drudgery, and denying himself almost every comfort, for the purpose of supplying a silly, affected old woman with superfluities, which she accepted with but little gratitude. But all his affection had been concentrated on her.

He had neither brother nor sister, neither son nor daughter. To him she was beautiful as the Gunnings, and witty as Lady Mary. Her opinion of his writings was more important to him than the voice of the pit of Drury Lane Theatre or the judgment of the Monthly Review. The chief support which had sustained him through the most arduous labour of his life was the hope that she would enjoy the fame and the profit which he anticipated from his Dictionary. She was gone; and in that vast labyrinth of streets, peopled by eight hundred thousand human beings, he was alone. Yet it was necessary for him to set himself, as he expressed it, doggedly to work. After three more laborious years, the Dictionary was at length complete.

JOHNSON PUBLISHES HIS DICTIONARY

The publication of his dictionary of the English language made Johnson the most famous man in England. The following is Macaulay's criticism of it:

1. It was hailed with an enthusiasm such as no similar work has ever excited.
2. It was the first dictionary that could be read with pleasure.
3. The definitions show acuteness of thought and command of language.
4. The passages quoted from poets and divines make profitable reading.
5. Johnson was a wretched etymologist. He knew little or nothing of any Teutonic language and thus he was absolutely at the mercy of Junius and Skinner.

R. It had been generally supposed that this great work would be dedicated to the eloquent and accomplished nobleman to whom the prospectus had been addressed. He well knew the value of such a compliment; and therefore, when the day of publication drew near, he exerted himself to soothe, by a show of zealous and at the same time of delicate and judicious kindness, the pride which

he had so cruelly wounded. Since the *Ramblers* had ceased to appear, the town had been entertained by a journal called *The World*, to which many men of high rank and fashion contributed. In two successive numbers of the *World* the Dictionary was, to use the modern phrase, puffed with wonderful skill. The writings of Johnson were warmly praised. It was proposed that he should be invested with the authority of a Dictator, nay, of a Pope, over our language, and that his decisions about the meaning and the spelling of words should be received as final. His two folios, it was said, would of course be bought by everybody who could afford to buy them. It was soon known that these papers were written by Chesterfield. But the just resentment of Johnson was not to be so appeased. In a letter written with singular energy and dignity of thought and language, he repelled the tardy advances of his patron. The Dictionary came forth without a dedication. In the preface the author truly declared that he owed nothing to the great, and described the difficulties with which he had been left to struggle so forcibly and pathetically that the ablest and most malevolent of all the enemies of his fame, Horne Tooke, never could read that passage without tears.

The public, on this occasion, did Johnson full justice, and something more than justice. The best lexicographer may well be content if his productions are received by the world with cold esteem. But Johnson's Dictionary was hailed with an enthusiasm such as no similar work has ever excited. It was indeed the first dictionary which could be read with pleasure. The definitions show so much acuteness of thought and command of language, and the passages quoted from poets, divines, and philosophers are so skilfully selected, that a leisure hour may always be very agreeably spent in turning over the pages. The faults of the book resolve themselves, for the most part, into one great fault. Johnson was a wretched etymologist. He knew little or nothing of any Teutonic language except English, which indeed, as he wrote it, was scarcely a Teutonic language; and that he was absolutely at the mercy of Junius and Skinner.

THE DICTIONARY GIVES FAME BUT NO WEALTH

S. The Dictionary, though it raised Johnson's fame, added nothing to his pecuniary means. The fifteen hundred guineas which the booksellers had agreed to pay him had been advanced and spent before the last sheets issued from the press. It is painful to relate that, twice in the course of the year which followed the publication of this great work, he was arrested and carried to spunging-houses, and that he was twice indebted for his liberty to his excellent friend Richardson. It was still necessary for the man who had been formerly saluted by the highest authority as Dictator of the English language to supply his wants by constant toil. He abridged his Dictionary. He proposed to bring out an edition of Shakespeare by subscription; and many subscribers sent in their names and laid down their money; but he soon found the task so little to his taste that he turned to more attractive employments. He contributed many papers to a new monthly journal, which was called the Literary Magazine. Few of these papers have much interest; but among them was the very best thing that he ever wrote, a masterpiece both of reasoning and of satirical pleasantry, the review of Jenyns's *Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil*.

JOHNSON IN 1758 BRINGS OUT A SECOND SERIES OF ESSAYS
CALLED THE IDLER

T. In the spring of 1758 Johnson put forth the first of a series of essays, entitled *The Idler*. During two years these essays continued to appear weekly. They were eagerly read, widely circulated, and, indeed, impudently pirated, while they were still in the original form, and had a large sale when collected into volumes. *The Idler* may be described as a second part of the *Rambler*, somewhat livelier and somewhat weaker than the first part.

RASSELAS, A NOVEL, IS PUBLISHED BY JOHNSON TO PAY HIS
MOTHER'S FUNERAL EXPENSES

U. While Johnson was busied with his *Idlers*, his mother, who had accomplished her ninetieth year, died at Lichfield. It was long since he had seen her; but he had not failed to contribute largely, out of his small means, to her comfort. In order to defray the charges of her funeral, and to pay some debts which she had left, he wrote a little book in a single week, and sent off the sheets to the press without reading them over. A hundred pounds were paid him for the copyright; and the purchasers had great cause to be pleased with their bargain; for the book was *Rasselas*.

MACAULAY SCORES RASSELAS

As usual, Macaulay goes to great lengths to point out what he considers Johnson's shortcomings. He says that *Rasselas* is little more than a dissertation of the author's favorite theme, the *Vanity of Human Wishes*; that the style is pompously pedantic; that the author never uses a word of two syllables where it is possible to use a word of six; that he never lets a waiting-woman relate her adventures without balancing every noun with another noun and every adjective with another adjective; that the plan of the story violates the proprieties of time and place and ascribes to the savage Abyssinians the manners and opinions of the English; that the heroes and heroines of *Rasselas* are meant to be Abyssinians, but they are plainly English; and that worst of all, Johnson introduces the flirtations and jealousies of English ball-rooms into a land of harems and polygamy.

The success of *Rasselas* was great, though such ladies as Miss Lydia Languish must have been grievously disappointed when they found that the new volume from the circulating library was little more than a dissertation

on the author's favourite theme, the Vanity of Human Wishes; that the Prince of Abyssinia was without a mistress, and the Princess without a lover; and that the story set the hero and the heroine down exactly where it had taken them up. The style was the subject of much eager controversy. The Monthly Review and the Critical Review took different sides. Many readers pronounced the writer a pompous pedant, who would never use a word of two syllables where it was possible to use a word of six, and who could not make a waiting woman relate her adventures without balancing every noun with another noun, and every epithet with another epithet. Another party, not less zealous, cited with delight numerous passages in which weighty meaning was expressed with accuracy and illustrated with splendour. And both the censure and the praise were merited.

About the plan of *Rasselas* little was said by the critics; and yet the faults of the plan might seem to invite severe criticism. Johnson has frequently blamed Shakespeare for neglecting the proprieties of time and place, and for ascribing to one age or nation the manners and opinions of another. Yet Shakespeare has not sinned in this way more grievously than Johnson. *Rasselas* and *Imlac*, *Nekayah* and *Pekuah*, are evidently meant to be Abyssinians of the eighteenth century: for the Europe which *Imlac* describes is the Europe of the eighteenth century, and the inmates of the Happy Village talk familiarly of that law of gravitation which Newton discovered, and which was not fully received even at Cambridge till the eighteenth century. What a real company of Abyssinians would have been may be learned from Bruce's Travels. But Johnson, not content with turning filthy savages, ignorant of their letters, and gorged with raw steaks cut from living cows, into philosophers as eloquent and enlightened as himself or his friend Burke, and into ladies as highly accomplished as Mrs. Lennox or Mrs. Sheridan, transferred the whole domestic system of England to Egypt. Into a land of harems, a land of polygamy, a land where women are married without ever being seen, he introduced the flirtations and jealousies of our ball-

rooms. In a land where there is boundless liberty of divorce, wedlock is described as the indissoluble compact. "A youth and maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of each other. Such," says Rasselas, "is the common process of marriage." Such it may have been, and may still be, in London, but assuredly not at Cairo. A writer who was guilty of such improprieties had little right to blame the poet who made Hector quote Aristotle, and represented Julio Romano as flourishing in the days of the oracle of Delphi.

ALLUSIONS AND UNUSUAL PHRASES IN PART II

Politian—the friend of Lorenzo de Medici and one of the restorers of learning.

Queensberrys and Lepels—leading English families.

Henry Fielding, 1707-1754—first great English novelist, author of Tom Jones.

Drury Lane—one of the chief streets of London.

Osborne—a brutal bookseller whom Johnson knocked down.

Harleian Library—the famous library of Robert Harley.

Edward Cave—editor of the Gentleman's Magazine and a friend of Johnson's.

Lilliput—the land of the pigmies in Gulliver's Travels.

The Senate of Lilliput—the English Parliament.

Montagues and Capulets—rival Italian families who resembled the Whigs and Tories.

Sacheverell—a famous Tory preacher, 1672-1724.

Tom Tempest—a character in Johnson's Idler.

John Hampden—a patriot who defied Charles I.

Falkland and Clarendon—followers of Charles I.

Great Rebellion—rebellion against Charles I.

Juvenal—a stern Roman satirist, 60-140 A. D.

Pope—English poet, author of *Essay on Criticism*, 1688-1744.

Horace—Roman lyric poet in the age of Augustus.

Psalmianazar—an impostor who wrote a spurious history of Formosa deceiving the wits.

Newgate—a notorious London prison.

Warburton—a Shakespearian scholar and friend of Johnson.

Chesterfield—English man of letters who neglected Johnson when he first came to London.

Samuel Richardson, 1689-1761 — novelist, author of *Clarissa Harlowe*.

Young—poet, author of *Night Thoughts*.

David Hartley—eminent psychologist.

Dodington—a member of Parliament and patron of letters.

The Gunnings—two sisters said to be the most beautiful women alive in 1751.

Lady Mary—Lady Mary Montague, a brilliant wit and graceful letter writer.

Horne Tooke—John Horne Tooke, famous politician and philologist.

Miss Lydia Languish—a character in Sheridan's *Rivals*.

James Bruce—an African explorer.

Mrs. Lennox—a literary friend of Johnson's described by Boswell.

Mrs. Sheridan—mother of Richard Brinsley Sheridan and a noted entertainer in Johnson's time.

PART III

The third period of Johnson's life considered by Macaulay dates from 1762, the year he obtained his pension, to his death. As this division of the essay gives an ac-

count of the "Immortal Club," it is the pathway to one of the most interesting ages of English history and opens up a fertile field for the study of the many famous men of Johnson's time as well as the customs and manners of the eighteenth century.

JOHNSON RECEIVED A PENSION

A. By such exertions as have been described, Johnson supported himself till the year 1762. In that year a great change in his circumstances took place. He had from a child been an enemy of the reigning dynasty. His Jacobite prejudices had been exhibited with little disguise both in his works and in his conversation. Even in his massy and elaborate Dictionary, he had, with a strange want of taste and judgment, inserted bitter and contumelious reflections on the Whig party. The excise, which was a favourite resource of Whig financiers, he had designated as a hateful tax. He had railed against the commissioners of excise in language so coarse that they had seriously thought of prosecuting him. He had with difficulty been prevented from holding up the Lord Privy Seal by name as an example of the meaning of the word "renegade." A pension he had defined as pay given to a state hireling to betray his country; a pensioner as a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey a master. It seemed unlikely that the author of these definitions would himself be pensioned. But that was a time of wonders. George the Third had ascended the throne; and had, in the course of a few months, disgusted many of the old friends and conciliated many of the old enemies of his house. The city was becoming mutinous. Oxford was becoming loyal. Cavendishes and Bentincks were murmuring. Somersets and Wyndhams were hastening to kiss hands. The head of the treasury was now Lord Bute, who was a Tory, and could have no objection to Johnson's Toryism. Bute wished to be thought a patron of men of letters; and Johnson was one of the most eminent and one of the most needy men of letters in

Europe. A pension of three hundred a year was graciously offered, and with very little hesitation accepted.

JOHNSON IN EASY CIRCUMSTANCES

B. This event produced a change in Johnson's whole way of life. For the first time since his boyhood he no longer felt the daily goad urging him to the daily toil. He was at liberty, after thirty years of anxiety and drudgery, to indulge his constitutional indolence, to lie in bed till two in the afternoon, and to sit up talking till four in the morning, without fearing either the printer's devil or the sheriff's officer.

EASE AND COMFORT RETARD THE PRODUCTION OF JOHNSON'S EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE

C. One laborious task indeed he had bound himself to perform. He had received large subscriptions for his promised edition of Shakespeare; he had lived on those subscriptions during some years; and he could not without disgrace omit to perform his part of the contract. His friends repeatedly exhorted him to make an effort; and he repeatedly resolved to do so. But, notwithstanding their exhortations and his resolutions, month followed month, year followed year, and nothing was done. He prayed fervently against his idleness; he determined, as often as he received the sacrament, that he would no longer doze away and trifle away his time; but the spell under which he lay resisted prayer and sacrament. His private notes at this time are made up of self-reproaches. "My indolence," he wrote on Easter eve in 1764, "has sunk into grosser sluggishness. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year." Easter 1765 came, and found him still in the same state. "My time," he wrote, "has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. My memory grows confused, and I know not how the days pass over me." Happily for his honour, the charm which held him captive was at length broken by no gentle or friendly hand. He had

been weak enough to pay serious attention to a story about a ghost which haunted a house in Cock Lane, and had actually gone himself with some of his friends, at one in the morning, to St. John's Church, Clerkenwell, in the hope of receiving a communication from the perturbed spirit. But the spirit, though adjured with all solemnity, remained obstinately silent; and it soon appeared that a naughty girl of eleven had been amusing herself by making fools of so many philosophers. Churchill, who, confident in his powers, drunk with popularity, and burning with party spirit, was looking for some man of established fame and Tory politics to insult, celebrated the Cock Lane Ghost in three cantos, nicknamed Johnson Pomposo, asked where the book was which had been so long promised and so liberally paid for, and directly accused the great moralist of cheating. This terrible word proved effectual; and in October 1765 appeared, after a delay of nine years, the new edition of Shakespeare.

Macaulay's assertion that Johnson had probably never read a single scene of Massinger, Ford, Dekker, Webster, Marlowe, Beaumont or Fletcher, is gross exaggeration. In the catalogue of the philosopher's library number 616 is Beaumont and Fletcher's *Plays* 10, V, 1750. Number 361 is Fletcher's works. Number 123 is 5 vols. of Ben Jonson. Number 268 is Spenser's work, 6 V. As men like Johnson buy books to read, does it not seem incredible that Johnson was unacquainted with Beaumont and Fletcher? That Dekker, Massinger, Ford, Marlowe and Webster were not listed in his library may be accounted for through Johnson's dislike of ribaldry and obscenity. Their works would have little charm for the man who wrote of later dramatists:

The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame
Nor wished for Jonson's art or Shakespeare's flame.

Themselves they studied, as they felt, they writ:
Intrigue was plot; obscenity was wit.

*Prologue written for Garrick at the opening of the
Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1747.*

That the work saved Johnson's character for honesty; that it added nothing to the fame of his abilities and learning; that the preface, though it contains some good passages, was not in his best manner; that the best specimen is the note on the character of Polonius; that it would be difficult to name a more slovenly, a more worthless edition of any great classic; that the reader may turn over play after play without finding one happy conjectural emendation or one ingenious or satisfactory explanation of a passage which had baffled preceding commentators; that even in the two volumes of his Dictionary there is not a single passage quoted from any dramatist of the Elizabethan age, except Shakespeare and Ben Jonson; that Johnson was not familiar with old plays; that he ventured to publish an edition of Shakespeare without having even, as far as can be discovered, read a single scene of Massinger, Ford, Dekker, Webster, Marlowe, Beaumont or Fletcher: all these are asserted by Macaulay.

In spite of Macaulay's "sweeping list of faults," the preface is a great piece of criticism. It presents Shakespeare, not as a copyist, but as an original poet, who developed his art from his own mind and experience. In it Johnson does not hesitate to point out such faults of the great poet as inattention to morality, loose construction in the last half of his plays, indelicate references and quibbles. In addition, probably the best and most interesting part is Johnson's fine defense of Shakespeare for smashing the unities of time and place.

In regard to emendations, Macaulay is unjust. Johnson made 78 changes in *Hamlet*, of which 17 have been generally followed. Of his 86 corrections in *King Lear*, 16 have been accepted by various editors. In all of the changes which Johnson suggested, reason and good sense rules. One of his real services was to remove from the text the strange fantasies of Warburton.

D. This publication saved Johnson's character for honesty, but added nothing to the fame of his abilities and learning. The preface, though it contains some good passages, is not in his best manner. The most valuable notes are those in which he had an opportunity of showing how attentively he had during many years observed human life and human nature. The best specimen is the note on the character of Polonius. Nothing so good is to be found even in Wilhelm Meister's admirable examination of *Hamlet*. But here praise must end. It would be difficult to name a more slovenly, a more worthless edition of any great classic. The reader may turn over play after play without finding one happy conjectural emendation, or one ingenious and satisfactory explanation of a passage which had baffled preceding commentators. Johnson had, in his prospectus, told the world that he was peculiarly fitted for the task which he had undertaken, because he had, as a lexicographer, been under the necessity of taking a wider view of the English language than any of his predecessors. That his knowledge of our literature was extensive is indisputable. But, unfortunately, he had altogether neglected that very part of our literature with which it is especially desirable that an editor of Shakespeare should be conversant. It is dangerous to assert a negative. Yet little will be risked by the assertion, that in the two folio volumes of the *English Dictionary* there is not a single passage quoted from any dramatist of the Elizabethan age, except Shakespeare and Ben. Even from Ben the quotations are few. Johnson might easily, in a few months, have made himself well acquainted with every old play that was extant.

But it never seems to have occurred to him that this was a necessary preparation for the work which he had undertaken. He would doubtless have admitted that it would be the height of absurdity in a man who was not familiar with the works of Æschylus and Euripedes to publish an edition of Sophocles. Yet he ventured to publish an edition of Shakespeare, without having ever in his life, as far as can be discovered, read a single scene of Massinger, Ford, Dekker, Webster, Marlowe, Beaumont, or Fletcher. His detractors were noisy and scurrilous. Those who most loved and honoured him had little to say in praise of the manner in which he had discharged the duty of a commentator. He had however, acquitted himself of a debt which had long lain heavy on his conscience; and he sank back into the repose from which the sting of satire had roused him. He long continued to live upon the fame which he had already won. He was honoured by the University of Oxford with a Doctor's degree, by the Royal Academy with a professorship, and by the King with an interview, in which His Majesty most graciously expressed a hope that so excellent a writer would not cease to write. In the interval, however, between 1765 and 1775 Johnson published only two or three political tracts, the longest of which he could have produced in forty-eight hours, if he had worked as he worked on the *Life of Savage* and on *Rasselas*.

THE LITERARY CLUB

Of the nine famous men who loved Johnson and respected him as an intellectual giant, Burke was regarded as an oracle on questions of political eloquence and political philosophy. Beauclerk was renowned for his amours, his knowledge of the gay world, his fastidious taste and his sarcastic wit. Boswell became Johnson's biographer. Gibbon was the greatest historian of his time. Goldsmith was the representative of poetry and light literature. Garrick brought to the gathering his

inexhaustible pleasantry, his incomparable mimicry and his consummate knowledge of stage effect. Sir William Jones was the greatest linguist of that period. Johnson himself was the autocrat of literature and morality and the greatest conversationalist of his time. Bennet Langton was distinguished for his knowledge of Greek literature, for the orthodoxy of his opinions and for the sanctity of his life. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the father of English painting, was the representative of the Arts.

E. But, though his pen was now idle, his tongue was active. The influence exercised by his conversation, directly upon those with whom he lived, and indirectly on the whole literary world, was altogether without a parallel. His colloquial talents were indeed of the highest order. He had strong sense, quick discernment, wit, humour, immense knowledge of literature and of life, and an infinite store of curious anecdotes. As respected style, he spoke far better than he wrote. Every sentence which dropped from his lips was as correct in structure as the most nicely balanced period of the Rambler. But in his talk there were no pompous triads, and little more than a fair proportion of words in *osity* and *ation*. All was simplicity, ease and vigour. He uttered his short, weighty, and pointed sentences with a power of voice, and a justness and energy of emphasis, of which the effect was rather increased than diminished by the rollings of his huge form, and by the asthmatic gaspings and puffings in which the peals of his eloquence generally ended. Nor did the laziness which made him unwilling to sit down at his desk prevent him from giving instruction or entertainment orally. To discuss questions of taste, of learning, of casuistry, in language so exact and so forcible that it might have been printed without the alteration of a word, was to him no exertion, but a pleasure. He loved, as he said, to fold his legs and have his talk out. He was ready to bestow the overflowings of his full mind on anybody who would start a subject, on a fellow-passenger in a stage coach, or on the person who

sate at the same table with him in an eating-house. But his conversation was nowhere so brilliant and striking as when he was surrounded by a few friends, whose abilities and knowledge enabled them, as he once expressed it, to send him back every ball that he threw. Some of these, in 1764, formed themselves into a club, which gradually became a formidable power in the commonwealth of letters. The verdicts pronounced by this conclave on new books were speedily known over all London, and were sufficient to sell off a whole edition in a day, or to condemn the sheets to the service of the trunk-maker and the pastry-cook. Nor shall we think this strange when we consider what great and various talents and acquirements met in the little fraternity. Goldsmith was the representative of poetry and light literature, Reynolds of the arts, Burke of political eloquence and political philosophy. There, too, were Gibbon, the greatest historian, and Jones, the greatest linguist, of the age. Garrick brought to the meetings his inexhaustible pleasantry his incomparable mimicry, and his consummate knowledge of stage effect. Among the most constant attendants were two high-born and high-bred gentlemen, closely bound together by friendship, but of widely different characters and habits; Bennet Langton, distinguished by his skill in Greek literature, by the orthodoxy of his opinions, and by the sanctity of his life; and Topham Beauclerk, renowned for his amours, his knowledge of the gay world, his fastidious taste, and his sarcastic wit. To predominate over such a society was not easy. Yet even over such a society Johnson predominated. Burke might indeed have disputed the supremacy to which others were under the necessity of submitting. But Burke, though not generally a very patient listener, was content to take the second part when Johnson was present; and the club itself, consisting of so many eminent men, is to this day popularly designated as Johnson's Club.

BOSWELL A NOTED CLUB MEMBER

It is difficult to believe that Macaulay could have thought that he was writing a school classic when he penned the intemperate and inconsiderate sentences in paragraph thirty-nine. The worst that may be said of Boswell is that under the guise of friendship he forced himself upon Johnson and that after Johnson's death while smarting under the memory of the latter's rebukes, he published trivial foibles of the Great Doctor which he would not have even dared to breathe during the Lexicographer's life. That he supplied Macaulay with the materials for nearly all his attacks on Johnson cannot be denied; and that he was a much more charitable and a much more entertaining biographer than his defamer will scarcely be questioned.

Paragraph 39 may be explained by the English dislike for the Scotch of which Macaulay had his share. It still exists. Some years ago an Englishman wrote a book called "The Unspeakable Scott" ending with this crude paragraph:

"There are only three decent Scotchmen in the world. The first is half English, the second is half Irish, and the third is half drunk."

Macaulay, it seems, must have been laboring under similar prejudice when he wrote this famous paragraph on Boswell.

E. Among the members of this celebrated body was one to whom it has owed the greater part of its celebrity, yet who was regarded with little respect by his brethren, and had not without difficulty obtained a seat among them. This was James Boswell, a young Scotch lawyer, heir to an honourable name and a fair estate. That he was a coxcomb and a bore, weak, vain, pushing, curious, garrulous, was obvious to all who were acquainted with

him. That he could not reason, that he had no wit, no humour, no eloquence, is apparent from his writings. And yet his writings are read beyond the Mississippi, and under the Southern Cross, and are likely to be read as long as the English exists, either as a living or as a dead language. Nature had made him a slave and an idolator. His mind resembled those creepers which the botanists call parasites, and which can subsist only by clinging round the stems and imbibing the juices of stronger plants. He must have fastened himself on somebody. He might have fastened himself on Wilkes, and have become the fiercest patriot in the Bill of Rights Society. He might have fastened himself on Whitfield, and have become the loudest field preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. In a happy hour he fastened himself on Johnson. The pair might seem ill matched. For Johnson had early been prejudiced against Boswell's country. To a man of Johnson's strong understanding and irritable temper, the silly egotism and adulation of Boswell must have been as teasing as the constant buzz of a fly. Johnson hated to be questioned; and Boswell was eternally cathechising him on all kinds of subjects; and sometimes propounded such questions as "What would you do, sir, if you were locked up in a tower with a baby?" Johnson was a water drinker; and Boswell was a wine-bibber, and indeed little better than a habitual sot. It was impossible that there should be perfect harmony between two such companions. Indeed, the great man was sometimes provoked into fits of passion in which he said things which the small man, during a few hours, seriously resented. Every quarrel, however, was soon made up. During twenty years the disciple continued to worship the master: the master continued to scold the disciple, to sneer at him, and to love him. The two friends ordinarily resided at a great distance from each other. Boswell practised in the Parliament House of Edinburgh, and could pay only occasional visits to London. During those visits his chief business was to watch Johnson, to discover all Johnson's habits, to turn the conversation to subjects about which Johnson was likely to say some-

thing remarkable, and to fill quarto note books with minutes of what Johnson had said. In this way were gathered the materials out of which was afterwards constructed the most interesting biographical work in the world.

JOHNSON'S PLEASANT LIFE WITH THE THRALES CONTRASTED WITH HIS EXISTENCE AT HIS OWN HOME ON FLEET STREET

F. Soon after the club began to exist, Johnson formed a connection less important indeed to his fame, but much more important to his happiness, than his connection with Boswell. Henry Thrale, one of the most opulent brewers in the kingdom, a man of sound and cultivated understanding, rigid principles, and liberal spirit, was married to one of those clever, kind-hearted, engaging, vain, pert young women, who are perpetually doing or saying what is not exactly right, but who, do or say what they may, are always agreeable. In 1765 the Thrales became acquainted with Johnson, and the acquaintance ripened fast into friendship. They were astonished and delighted by the brilliancy of his conversation. They were flattered by finding that a man so widely celebrated, preferred their house to any other in London. Even the peculiarities which seemed to unfit him for civilised society, his gesticulations, his rollings, his puffings, his mutterings, the strange way in which he put on his clothes, the ravenous eagerness with which he devoured his dinner, his fits of melancholy, his fits of anger, his frequent rudeness, his occasional ferocity, increased the interest which his new associates took in him. For these things were the cruel marks left behind by a life which had been one long conflict with disease and with adversity. In a vulgar hack writer such oddities would have excited only disgust. But in a man of genius, learning, and virtue their effect was to add pity to admiration and esteem. Johnson soon had an apartment at the brewery in Southwark, and a still more pleasant apartment at the villa of his friends on Streatham Common. A large

part of every year he passed in those abodes, abodes which must have seemed magnificent and luxurious indeed, when compared with the dens in which he had generally been lodged. But his chief pleasures were derived from what the astronomer of his Abyssinian tale called "the endearing elegance of female friendship." Mrs. Thrale rallied him, soothed him, coaxed him, and, if she sometimes provoked him by her flippancy, made ample amends by listening to his reproofs with angelic sweetness of temper. When he was diseased in body and in mind, she was the most tender of nurses. No comfort that wealth could purchase, no contrivance that womanly ingenuity, set to work by womanly compassion, could devise, was wanting to his sick-room. He requited her kindness by an affection pure as the affection of a father, yet delicately tinged with a gallantry which, though awkward, must have been more flattering than the attentions of a crowd of the fools who gloried in the names, now obsolete, of Buck and Maccaroni. It should seem that a full half of Johnson's life, during about sixteen years, was passed under the roof of the Thrales. He accompanied the family sometimes to Bath, and sometimes to Brighton, once to Wales, and once to Paris. But he had at the same time a house in one of the narrow and gloomy courts on the north of Fleet Street. In the garrets was his library, a large and miscellaneous collection of books, falling to pieces and begrimed with dust. On a lower floor he sometimes, but very rarely, regaled a friend with a plain dinner, a veal pie, or a leg of lamb and spinage, and a rice pudding. Nor was the dwelling uninhabited during his long absences. It was the home of the most extraordinary assemblage of inmates that ever was brought together. At the head of the establishment Johnson had placed an old lady named Williams, whose chief recommendations were her blindness and her poverty. But, in spite of her murmurs and reproaches, he gave an asylum to another lady who was as poor as herself, Mrs. Desmoulins, whose family he had known many years before in Staffordshire. Room was found for the daughter of Mrs. Desmoulins, and for another destitute damsel, who

was generally addressed as Miss Carmichael, but whom her generous host called Polly. An old quack doctor named Levett, who bled and dosed coal-heavers and hackney coachmen, and received for fees crusts of bread, bits of bacon, glasses of gin, and sometimes a little copper, completed this strange menagerie. All these poor creatures were at constant war with each other, and with Johnson's negro servant Frank. Sometimes, indeed, they transferred their hostilities from the servant to the master, complained that a better table was not kept for them, and railed or maundered till their benefactor was glad to make his escape to Streatham, or to the Mitre Tavern. And yet he, who was generally the haughtiest and most irritable of mankind, who was but too prompt to resent anything which looked like a slight on the part of a purse-proud bookseller, or of a noble and powerful patron, bore patiently from mendicants, who, but for his bounty, must have gone to the workhouse, insults more provoking than those for which he had knocked down Osborne and bidden defiance to Chesterfield. Year after year Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Desmoulins, Polly, and Levett continued to torment him and to live upon him.

JOHNSON PUBLISHES HIS JOURNEY TO THE HEBRIDES

Macauley's comments upon it are as follows:

1. It was for some weeks after publication the chief topic of conversation in all circles in which any attention was paid to literature.
2. The narrative is entertaining; and the speculations, whether sound or unsound, are ingenious.
3. The style, though pompous, is somewhat easier and more graceful than his earlier writings.
4. His prejudice against the Scots had become little more than a matter of jest, having been removed by the kindness and hospitality of the Highlanders.
5. Johnson's censure of the Scots is not unfriendly and the most enlightened Scotchman were well pleased with the book.

G. The course of life which has been described was interrupted in Johnson's sixty-fourth year by an important event. He had early read an account of the Hebrides, and had been much interested by learning that there was so near him a land peopled by a race which was still as rude and simple as in the Middle Ages. A wish to become intimately acquainted with a state of society so utterly unlike all that he had ever seen frequently crossed his mind. But it is not probable that his curiosity would have overcome his habitual sluggishness, and his love of the smoke, the mud, and the cries of London, had not Boswell importuned him to attempt the adventure, and offered to be his squire. At length, in August 1773, Johnson crossed the Highland line, and plunged courageously into what was then considered, by most Englishmen, as a dreary and perilous wilderness. After wandering about two months through the Celtic region, sometimes in rude boats which did not protect him from the rain, and sometimes on small shaggy ponies which could hardly bear his weight, he returned to his old haunts with a mind full of new images and new theories. During the following year he employed himself in recording his adventures. About the beginning of 1775, his *Journey to the Hebrides* was published, and was, during some weeks, the chief subject of conversation in all circles in which any attention was paid to literature. The book is still read with pleasure. The narrative is entertaining; the speculations, whether sound or unsound, are always ingenious; and the style, though too stiff and pompous, is somewhat easier and more graceful than that of his early writings. His prejudice against the Scotch had at length become little more than matter of jest; and whatever remained of the old feeling had been effectually removed by the kind and respectful hospitality with which he had been received in every part of Scotland. It was, of course, not to be expected that an Oxonian Tory should praise the Presbyterian polity and ritual, or that an eye accustomed to the hedgerows and parks of England should not be struck by the bareness of Berwickshire and East Lothian. But even in censure

Johnson's tone is not unfriendly. The most enlightened Scotchmen, with Lord Mansfield at their head, were well pleased. But some foolish and ignorant Scotchmen were moved to anger by a little unpalatable truth which was mingled with much eulogy, and assailed him whom they chose to consider as the enemy of their country, with libels much more dishonourable to their country than anything that he had ever said or written. They published paragraphs in the newspapers, articles in the magazines, six-penny pamphlets, five-shilling books. One scribbler abused Johnson for being blear-eyed; another for being a pensioner; a third informed the world that one of the Doctor's uncles had been convicted of felony in Scotland, and had found that there was in that country one tree capable of supporting the weight of an Englishman. Macpherson, whose *Fingal* had been proved in the *Journey* to be an impudent forgery, threatened to take vengeance with a cane. The only effect of this threat was that Johnson reiterated the charge of forgery in the most contemptuous terms, and walked about, during some time, with a cudgel, which, if the impostor had not been too wise to encounter it, would assuredly have descended upon him, to borrow the sublime language of his own epic poem, "like a hammer on the red son of the furnace."

INCIDENTS OF THE SCOTCH TRIP

H. Of other assailants Johnson took no notice whatever. He had early resolved never to be drawn into controversy; and he adhered to his resolution with a steadfastness which is the more extraordinary, because he was, both intellectually and morally, of the stuff of which controversialists are made. In conversation, he was a singularly eager, acute, and pertinacious disputant. When at a loss for good reasons, he had recourse to sophistry; and, when heated by altercation, he made unsparing use of sarcasm and invective. But, when he took his pen in his hand, his whole character seemed to be changed. A hundred bad writers misrepresented him and reviled him; but not one of the hundred could boast of

having been thought by him worthy of a refutation, or even of a retort. The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNicol and Hendersons did their best to annoy him, in the hope that he would give them importance by answering them. But the reader will in vain search his works for any allusion to Kenrick or Campbell, to MacNicol or Henderson. One Scotchman, bent on vindicating the fame of Scotch learning, defied him to the combat in a detestable Latin hexameter.

“*Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum.*”

But Johnson took no notice of the challenge. He had learned, both from his own observation and from literary history, in which he was deeply read, that the place of books in the public estimation is fixed, not by what is written about them, but by what is written in them; and that an author whose works are likely to live is very unwise if he stoops to wrangle with detractors whose works are certain to die. He always maintained that fame was a shuttlecock which could be kept up only by being beaten back, as well as beaten forward, and which would soon fall if there were only one battledore. No saying was oftener in his mouth than that fine apophthegm of Bentley, that no man was ever written down but by himself.

TAXATION NO TYRANNY IS JOHNSON'S POOREST WORK

I. Unhappily, a few months after the appearance of the *Journey to the Hebrides*, Johnson did what none of his envious assailants could have done, and to a certain extent succeeded in writing himself down. The disputes between England and her American colonies had reached a point at which no amicable adjustment was possible. Civil war was evidently impending; and the ministers seem to have thought that the eloquence of Johnson might with advantage be employed to inflame the nation against the opposition here, and against the rebels beyond the Atlantic. He had already written two or three tracts in defence of the foreign and domestic policy of the govern-

ment; and those tracts, though hardly worthy of him, were much superior to the crowd of pamphlets which lay on the counters of Almon and Stockdale. But his *Taxation no Tyranny* was a pitiable failure. The very title was a silly phrase, which can have been recommended to his choice by nothing but a jingling alliteration which he ought to have despised. The arguments were such as boys used in debating societies. The pleasantry was as awkward as the gambols of a hippopotamus. Even Boswell was forced to own that, in this unfortunate piece, he could detect no trace of his manter's powers. The general opinion was that the strong faculties which had produced the Dictionary and the Rambler were beginning to feel the effect of time and of disease, and that the old man would best consult his credit by writing no more.

But this was a great mistake. Johnson had failed, not because his mind was less vigorous than when he wrote *Rasselas* in the evenings of a week, but because he had foolishly chosen, or suffered others to choose for him, a subject such as he would at no time have been competent to treat. He was in no sense a statesman. He never willingly read or thought or talked about affairs of state. He loved biography, literary history, the history of manners; but political history was positively distasteful to him. The question at issue between the colonies and the mother country was a question about which he had really nothing to say. He failed, therefore, as the greatest men must fail when they attempt to do that for which they are unfit; as Burke would have failed if Burke had tried to write comedies like those of Sheridan; as Reynolds would have failed if Reynolds had tried to paint landscapes like those of Wilson. Happily, Johnson soon had an opportunity of proving most signally that his failure was not to be ascribed to intellectual decay.

The *Lives of the Poets* was Johnson's last and greatest work. Of it Macaulay sings the following paean of praise:

1. The narratives are as entertaining as any novel.

2. The remarks on life and on human nature are eminently shrewd and profound.

3. The criticisms are often excellent, and, even when grossly and provokingly unjust, well deserve to be studied.

4. That however erroneous his opinions may be, they are never silly.

5. The criticisms are the judgments of a mind trammelled by prejudice and deficient in sensibility, but vigorous and acute.

6. His comments generally contain a portion of valuable truth which deserves to be separated from the alloy; and at the very worst, they mean something, a praise to which much of what is called criticism has no pretensions.

J. On Easter eve, 1777, some persons, deputed by a meeting which consisted of forty of the first booksellers in London, called upon him. Though he had some scruples about doing business at that season, he received his visitors with much civility. They came to inform him that a new edition of the English poets, from Cowley downwards, was in contemplation, and to ask him to furnish short biographical prefaces. He readily undertook the task, a task for which he was pre-eminently qualified. His knowledge of the literary history of England since the Restoration was unrivalled. That knowledge he had derived partly from books, and partly from sources which had long been closed; from old Grub Street traditions; from the talk of forgotten poetasters and pamphleteers who had long been lying in parish vaults; from the recollections of such men as Gilbert Walmesley, who had conversed with the wits of Button's; Cibber, who had mutilated the plays of two generations of dramatists; Orrery, who had been admitted to the society of Swift; and Savage, who had rendered services of no very honourable kind to Pope. The biographer therefore sate down to his task with a mind full of matter. He had at first intended to give only a paragraph to every minor

poet, and only four or five pages to the greatest name. But the flood of anecdote and criticism overflowed the narrow channel. The work, which was originally meant to consist only of a few sheets, swelled into ten volumes, small volumes, it is true, and not closely printed. The first four appeared in 1779, the remaining six in 1781.

The *Lives of the Poets* are, on the whole, the best of Johnson's works. The narratives are as entertaining as any novel. The remarks on life and on human nature are eminently shrewd and profound. The criticisms are often excellent, and, even when grossly and provokingly unjust, well deserve to be studied. For, however erroneous they may be, they are never silly. They are the judgments of a mind untrammelled by prejudice and deficient in sensibility, but vigorous and acute. They therefore generally contain a portion of valuable truth which deserves to be separated from the alloy; and, at the very worst, they mean something, a praise to which much of what is called criticism in our time has no pretensions.

Savage's Life, Johnson reprinted nearly as it had appeared in 1744. Whoever, after reading that life, will turn to the other lives will be struck by the difference of style. Since Johnson had been at ease in his circumstances he had written little and had talked much. When, therefore, he, after the lapse of years, resumed his pen, the mannerism which he had contracted while he was in the constant habit of elaborate composition was less perceptible than formerly; and his diction frequently had a colloquial ease which it had formerly wanted. The improvement may be discerned by a skilful critic in the *Journey to the Hebrides*, and in the *Lives of the Poets* is so obvious that it cannot escape the notice of the most careless reader.

Among the lives the best are perhaps those of Cowley, Dryden, and Pope. The very worst is, beyond all doubt, that of Gray.

This great work at once became popular. There was, indeed, much just and much unjust censure: but even those who were loudest in blame were attracted by the book in spite of themselves. Malone computed the gains

of the publishers at five or six thousand pounds. But the writer was very poorly remunerated. Intending at first to write very short prefaces, he had stipulated for only two hundred guineas. The booksellers, when they saw how far his performance had surpassed his promise, added only another hundred. Indeed, Johnson, though he did not despise, or affect to despise, money, and though his strong sense and long experience ought to have qualified him to protect his own interests, seems to have been singularly unskilful and unlucky in his literary bargains. He was generally reputed the first English writer of his time. Yet several writers of his time sold their copyrights for sums such as he never ventured to ask. To give a single instance, Robertson received four thousand five hundred pounds for the *History of Charles V.*; and it is no disrespect to the memory of Robertson to say that the *History of Charles V.* is both a less valuable and a less amusing book than the "*Lives of the Poets.*"

Macaulay's account of Mrs. Thrale's quarrel with Johnson and her second marriage shows almost as bad taste as his continual derision of Johnson.

K. Johnson was now in his seventy-second year. The infirmities of age were coming fast upon him. That inevitable event of which he never thought without horror was brought near to him; and his whole life was darkened by the shadow of death. He had often to pay the cruel price of longevity. Every year he lost what could never be replaced. The strange dependents to whom he had given shelter, and to whom, in spite of their faults, he was strongly attached by habit, dropped off one by one; and, in the silence of his home, he regretted even the noise of their scolding matches. The kind and generous Thrale was no more; and it would have been well if his wife had been laid beside him. But she survived to be the laughing-stock of those who had envied her, and to draw from the eyes of the old man who had loved her beyond anything in the world tears far more bitter than he would have shed over her grave. With some estimable

and many agreeable qualities, she was not made to be independent. The control of a mind more steadfast than her own was necessary to her respectability. While she was restrained by her husband, a man of sense and firmness, indulgent to her taste in trifles, but always the undisputed master of his house, her worst offences had been impertinent jokes, white lies, and short fits of pettishness ending in sunny good humour. But he was gone; and she was left an opulent widow of forty, with strong sensibility, volatile fancy, and slender judgment. She soon fell in love with a music-master from Brescia, in whom nobody but herself could discover anything to admire. Her pride, and perhaps some better things, struggled hard against this degrading passion. But the struggle irritated her nerves, soured her temper, and at length endangered her health. Conscious that her choice was one which Johnson could not approve, she became desirous to escape from his inspection. Her manner towards him changed. She was sometimes cold and sometimes petulant. She did not conceal her joy when he left Streatham; she never pressed him to return; and, if he came unbidden, she received him in a manner which convinced him he was no longer a welcome guest. He took the very intelligible hints which she gave. He read, for the last time, a chapter of the Greek Testament in the library which had been formed by himself. In a solemn and tender prayer he commended the house and its inmates to the Divine protection, and, with emotions which choked his voice and convulsed his powerful frame, left for ever that beloved home for the gloomy and desolate house behind Fleet Street, where the few and evil days which still remained to him were to run out. Here, in June 1783, he had a paralytic stroke, from which, however, he recovered, and which does not appear to have at all impaired his intellectual faculties. But other maladies came thick upon him. His asthma tormented him day and night. Dropsical symptoms made their appearance. While sinking under a complication of diseases, he heard that the woman whose friendship had been the chief happiness of sixteen years of his life had

married an Italian fiddler; that all London was crying shame upon her; and that the newspapers and magazines were filled with allusions to the Ephesian matron, and the two pictures in Hamlet. He vehemently said that he would try to forget her existence. He never uttered her name. Every memorial of her which met his eye he flung into the fire. She meanwhile fled from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen and countrywomen to a land where she was unknown, hastened across Mount Cenis, and learned, while passing a merry Christmas of concerts and lemonade parties at Milan, that the great man with whose name hers is inseparably associated had ceased to exist.

JOHNSON'S DEATH-BED

L. He had, in spite of much mental and bodily affliction, clung vehemently to life. The feeling described in that fine but gloomy paper which closes the series of his *Idlers* seemed to grow stronger in him as his last hour drew near. He fancied that he should be able to draw his breath more easily in a southern climate, and would probably have set out for Rome and Naples, but for his fear of the expense of the journey. That expense, indeed, he had the means of defraying; for he had laid up about two thousand pounds, the fruit of labours which had made the fortune of several publishers. But he was unwilling to break in upon this hoard, and he seems to have wished even to keep its existence a secret. Some of his friends hoped that the government might be induced to increase his pension to six hundred pounds a year, but this hope was disappointed, and he resolved to stand one English winter more. That winter was his last. His legs grew weaker; his breath grew shorter; the fatal water gathered fast, in spite of incisions which he, courageous against pain, but timid against death, urged his surgeons to make deeper and deeper. Though the tender care which had mitigated his sufferings during months of sickness at Streatham was withdrawn, he was not left desolate. The ablest physicians and surgeons attended

him, but refused to accept fees from him. Burke parted from him with deep emotion. Windham sate much in the sick-room, arranged the pillows, and sent his own servant to watch at night by the bed. Frances Burney, whom the old man had cherished with fatherly kindness, stood weeping at the door; while Langdon, whose piety eminently qualified him to be an adviser and comforter at such a time, received the last pressure of his friend's hand within. When at length the moment, dreaded through so many years, came close, the dark cloud passed away from Johnson's mind. His temper became unusually patient and gentle; he ceased to think with terror of death, and of that which lies beyond death; and he spoke much of the mercy of God, and of the propitiation of Christ. In this serene frame of mind he died on the 13th of December 1784. He was laid, a week later, in Westminster Abbey, among the eminent men of whom he had been the historian,—Cowley and Denham, Dryden and Congreve, Gay, Prior, and Addison.

JOHNSON WAS A GREAT AND GOOD MAN

M. Since his death the popularity of his works—the *Lives of the Poets*, and, perhaps, the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, excepted—has greatly diminished. His *Dictionary* has been altered by editors till it can scarcely be called his. An allusion to his *Rambler* or his *Idler* is not readily apprehended in literary circles. The fame even of *Rasselas* has grown somewhat dim. But, though the celebrity of the writings may have declined, the celebrity of the writer, strange to say, is as great as ever. Boswell's book has done for him more than the best of his own books could do. (The memory of other authors is kept alive by their works. But the memory of Johnson keeps many of his works alive.) The old philosopher is still among us in the brown coat with the metal buttons and the shirt which ought to be at wash, blinking, puffing, rolling his head, drumming with his fingers, tearing his meat like a tiger, and swallowing his tea in oceans. No human being who has been more than seventy years in

the grave is so well known to us. And it is but just to say that our intimate acquaintance with what he would himself have called the anfractuosities of his intellect and of his temper serves only to strengthen our conviction that he was both a great and a good man.

Notwithstanding Macaulay's crude sarcasm and coarse jibes at his manners and appearance, until piety, tenderness, loyalty, fortitude, benevolence and honesty cease to be virtues, the name of Samuel Johnson will be remembered with respect and admiration.

ALLUSIONS AND UNUSUAL PHRASES IN PART III

Churchill—a leading Whig wit in Johnson's time

Wilhelm Meister—the hero of Goethe's novel of the same title

Ben Jonson—contemporary dramatist of Shakespeare

Massinger, 1584-1640—author of *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*

Webster, 1582-1638—author of *The White Devil*

Decker, 1570-1637—wrote *A Woman Killed with Kindness*

Ford—produced *The Broken Heart*

Beaumont and Fletcher—contemporaries of Shakespeare

Marlowe, 1564-1593—wrote *Dr. Faustus*

John Wilkes—a noted agitator, champion of liberty of the press

Mitre Tavern—a Haunt of Johnson's in Fleet Street

Lord Mansfield—Chief Justice of the King's Bench from 1756 to 1788

Macpherson—a Scotsman who claimed to have discovered and translated the poems of Ossian

Whitefield—a noted Methodist preacher with the eloquence of Billy Sunday

Richard Bentley, 1662-1742—a famous English classical scholar and critic

Richard Wilson—a great English landscape painter

Richard Brinsley Sheridan—the author of *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*

Edmund Malone—an eminent critic and scholar

Frances Burney—author of *Evelina* and praised by Johnson

ARNOLD'S ESSAY ON WORDSWORTH
ANALYZED

ARNOLD'S WORDSWORTH ANALYZED

The addition of Arnold's essay on Wordsworth to the essays read in the Four Years course in English is an excellent selection. It is a pleasing contrast not only to the long paragraphs, the driving energy, the balanced epithets, the bow-wow opinions and the declamatory visions of Macaulay, but also to his rambling away from his subject, to his positive statements and to his infallible judgments. Without effort, Arnold aims at truth, not a rhetorical display of abusive adjectives or a crude caricature which may be witty but which is in Macaulay usually exaggerated. Reading Arnold's Wordsworth after the headlong pace one is rushed through Macaulay's Johnson, one feels as if he had passed from an ocean of storms into a sea of tranquillity.

The student will learn from this essay that Arnold is a just critic. There is nothing vicious, malicious or rancorous in this effort or in any of his writings. Believing that the great art of criticism is to get one's self out of the way and let humanity judge, he defines criticism as "a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world." This "best that is known and thought in the world" is set forth with moderation, fine taste, serene justice, pleasing magnanimity, faultless grace and matchless charm.

Though the foregoing is high praise, nevertheless the student should remember that critics are not infallible, that Arnold with all his sincerity and charm preferred Grant to Lincoln, and that his ideas about conduct, beauty, equality, social life and manners, though expressed with clearness and charm, are far from being all that may be said about these interesting subjects.

ARNOLD'S WORDSWORTH ANALYZED

Paragraph one opens the essay with an interesting saying of Macaulay's. Next, Arnold points out that Wordsworth's popularity was greatest between 1830 and 1840, that for many years Wordsworth's poetry had not brought him enough to buy his shoestrings, that the poetry-reading public were slow to recognize him, that Scott effaced him and that Byron was more popular.

Note the absence of loudness, vulgarity, exaggeration, color, brutality. Observe the art in catching the reader's curiosity by introducing a remark by a great author. Contrast the length of this paragraph of 165 words with the first of Macaulay's Johnson, which has about six hundred words.

In paragraph two, the essayist states that Wordsworth's popularity was owing to such events as the death of Byron, Scott's preferring to write novels instead of poetry, the influence of Coleridge at Cambridge and the changing of Rydal Mount, Wordsworth's home in the Lake district, into a shrine.

Arnold's only attempt at humor in the entire essay is his telling the anecdote related to him by Wordsworth, how one of the pilgrims, a clergyman, asked him if he had ever written anything besides "The Guide to the Lakes."

The effect of Tennyson's appearance as a poet in 1842 on Wordsworth's popularity, Arnold shows in paragraph three was of no consequence among the good judges of poetry but among the great body of poetry-readers Wordsworth lost more and more and Tennyson gained them. The statement that the diminution of Wordsworth's popularity was visible in 1852 when he died is undoubtedly true. His death, however, occurred in 1850.

Note how little Arnold has said about the poet's birth, parentage, education and death so far and contrast his method with Macaulay's extensive treatment of these subjects.

That Wordsworth's poetry has continued to wane, that the influence of Coleridge has met the same fate, that Wordsworth's followers have praised his poetry highly, that the public has not grown enthusiastic about it, that the selections in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* gave offence to some, that tenth-rate critics are ignorant of Wordsworth's poetry and that he is unknown to but few on the continent are statements Arnold makes in paragraph four.

Mark these statements and note that Arnold makes them without casting any reflection upon Wordsworth. Nor does he smother him with praise. Observe that he is stating the truth as he sees it about Wordsworth's poetry.

By reason of what he has already written, Arnold declares in paragraph five that he thinks that Wordsworth up to this time (1879, when he wrote this essay) had not obtained his deserts. By his deserts he means that Wordsworth was at that time provincial and unknown even to but few of the French Academy—a body of intellectuals famous for their knowledge of art and literature. In other words, Wordsworth up to 1879 had

not won much lasting fame or glory. Arnold gives here his famous definition of real glory as distinguished from national or provincial glory. The conception of the whole group of civilized nations as being for intellectual and spiritual purposes one great confederation bound to joint action and working toward a common result; a confederation whose members have a due knowledge both of the past out of which they all proceed and of one another was the ideal of Goethe. To be recognized by the verdict of such a confederation as a master, or even as seriously and eminently in one's own line of intellectual and spiritual activity, is indeed glory—a glory which it would be difficult to rate too highly.

That Arnold's sensitive soul revolted at everything narrow, everything small, everything contemptible and everything provincial, is evident in all his works. Philistines, Barbarians, Populace, these are his terms for English narrowness, self-satisfaction and the multitude. His ideal was a broad-minded, magnanimous people—a people with ability to recognize a man no matter whether he were non-conformist, Catholic or Church of England, no matter to what race or clime he belonged.

That the things one possesses though one may like them are not always the best, is a truth Arnold expresses in paragraph six. To prove it, he examines what England has done in painting and music and finds that her painting is questionable and that her musicians have not yet been born. Next, he takes up science and learns that the world accepts Newton and Darwin at the English value.

Continuing his investigation in paragraph seven he subjects English poets and poetry to a searching examination. After he has defined poetry as "nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes

nearest to being able to utter truth, he also states that it is no small accomplishment to succeed eminently in poetry, that much is required to come to a successful conclusion as to what is good poetry, that it is difficult to arrive at a sure general verdict without spending a long period of time, that England's estimate of her own poets is not a sufficient test because that opinion is likely to be mingled with considerable provincial praise, that England's claim to great poets a hundred years ago was merely a pretension which no one but an Englishman would think of asserting and that the scornful and disparaging things said by foreigners about Shakespeare and Milton and England's overestimate of them have been often quoted and will be in every one's remembrance.

The foregoing paragraph is one in which the student can see the breadth and thoroughness of Arnold's mind. He cares not for London's opinion or Edinburgh's opinion of English poets. He wants an unbiased, disinterested, impartial judgment—a judgment of the most competent critics of the world before he adorns the brow of a poet with the crown of greatness.

That Shakespeare and Milton have passed this test is the conclusion Arnold comes to in paragraph eight. By quoting the French critic, M. Cochin's flattering estimate of Shakespeare and by giving Goethe's high praise of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, Arnold sees England's appreciation of her two most famous poets recognized by celebrated European critics, and decides that both are forever enrolled among the great.

The seriousness of real glory, the value of deserved glory to mankind, its advantage to the nation producing a real poet and its harmless effect on the poet himself are all considered in paragraph nine. The truth of these

remarks can readily be seen by studying the lives of either Shakespeare or Milton. Observe how deftly Arnold applies in paragraph ten, all that he has said to the case of Wordsworth. Wordsworth, he states, is not fully recognized at home and not at all abroad. He concludes, therefore, he has not yet won the real glory that rests on Shakespeare and Milton. Nevertheless, on account of the great body of poetical work superior in power, in interest, in qualities which give enduring freshness to that which any of the others has left, Arnold places Wordsworth above all poets since Milton.

The student should remember that Arnold wrote this opinion forty-seven years ago and that it is the accepted opinion of the majority of poetry lovers to-day.

In paragraph eleven Arnold goes farther and places Wordsworth before all European poets since Molière's death except Goethe. He thinks that Wordsworth's poetical work wears, and will wear better on the whole, than any one of the European poets during the period named.

In this, also, the student will find that the world of to-day has reached a similar verdict.

Arnold in paragraph twelve predicts that Wordsworth will in time occupy the fifth place in world poetry and that the order will be Shakespeare, Molière, Milton, Goethe, Wordsworth. He also feels that there are certain obstacles which may hinder or delay such recognition but that these obstacles may be removed.

Some of these obstacles, such as the lengthy *Excursion*, the *Prelude*, and inferior pieces, are considered in paragraph thirteen and shown to be blemishes. Here, Arnold also points out that although Shakespeare had blemishes which he knew were defects, Wordsworth, on the other

hand, is unconscious of writing anything insipid, flat or dull. Another observation of Arnold which is very true is that the impression made by one of Wordsworth's fine pieces is often dulled and spoiled by a very inferior piece coming after it.

Every one will agree with Arnold's statement in paragraph fourteen that Wordsworth produced his best work between 1798 and 1808, that a mass of inferior works detracts from his good poems, that Wordsworth to be recognized far and wide as a great poet needs to be relieved of this burdensome baggage, and that if this is not done he will be regarded as great only by the few—a poet valued far below his real worth by the world.

In paragraphs fifteen and sixteen, another obstacle Arnold considers is Wordsworth's classification of his poems. Wordsworth, says Arnold, classified his poems not according to any commonly received plan of arrangement but according to some mental physiology. Arnold prefers the Greek divisions of epic, dramatic, lyric as natural, instead of the artificial arrangement of Wordsworth which does not show any relationship among his poems.

Arnold, in paragraph seventeen, differs from the common opinion that Wordsworth wrote only about half a dozen great poems. On the contrary, he says that his own admiration for Wordsworth and his belief in Wordsworth's superiority is owing to the great and ample body of powerful work which remains after all Wordsworth's inferior work has been cleared away. Moreover, he states that in that work Wordsworth gives foundations to rest upon, that Wordsworth communicates his spirit to his readers and that he engages and fills the souls of those who study him.

In paragraph eighteen Arnold continues this search for Wordsworth's superiority and concludes that it is in his great body of powerful and significant work which remains to him, after every reduction and deduction has been made.

That Wordsworth's work needs pruning is the main idea in paragraph nineteen. Arnold is certain that if his best work was produced alone, Wordsworth would make his way without help because the superior worth and power of his poetry will be finally recognized and appreciated by mankind.

Paragraph twenty is used by Arnold to point out what this power and worth consists of in Wordsworth's poems. He shows that it is the application of the laws of poetic beauty and poetic truth to his ideas on man, on nature and on human life.

Voltaire's assertion that the greatness of the English poets is their treatment of moral ideas, Arnold takes up in paragraph twenty-one and points out that the word "moral" in its broadest sense bears on the question "how to live."

In considering this paragraph the student should remember that Voltaire's remark will not include Shakespeare, that Dr. Johnson found fault with the great bard on account of his indifference to morals, and that the quotation Arnold gives from Shakespeare does not bear on how to live.

Paragraph twenty-two is somewhat confusing. "To prefix to the term ideas here the term moral makes hardly any difference, because human life itself is in so preponderating a degree moral." To agree with what Arnold says here is to rob the poet of will and intention. It is the writer's intention which makes what he writes

moral, commonplace, unusual, powerful, dramatic, poetic or tiresome, not the prefixing of these terms by another, to what he has written.

Few will agree with Arnold's assertion that poetry is a criticism of life. Life is a compound of innumerable complexes—complexes the majority of which are not poetic and poetry has even according to Arnold's own assertion about Wordsworth's shoestrings, been more successful in teaching poets how to starve than how to live. Rules for anything so practical as "how to live," to be valuable cannot be found among poets for the majority of them history states did not live, they only existed. What Arnold means is that the poet must take his poetry from life, not that he interprets the whole of life.

Nor can the average reader agree with Arnold's assertion that poetry of indifference towards moral ideas is a poetry of indifference towards life. No one certainly would accuse Shakespeare of being indifferent to life, yet his poetry is indifferent to morals.

On the other hand, few will disagree with Arnold's statement made in paragraph twenty-four that the best and master thing is how to live. That the way to do this properly is to do your duty to your family, to your friends and fellow countrymen, to attain inward freedom, serenity, happiness, contentment, no one will question.

The contrast Arnold draws in paragraph twenty-five between Gautier and Wordsworth may be true, but his conclusion that the one deals with life and the other does not is rather sweeping. It would be better to say that both deal with life but that Wordsworth's way of dealing with it is more pleasing to one man and Gautier's is more at-

tractive to another. To take Wordsworth's narrow view as Arnold does is to forget Thomson's great lines:

Since God is ever present, ever felt
In the wide waste as in the city full.

Again Arnold's assertion in paragraph twenty-six that Wordsworth's superiority which places him above such poets as Voltaire, Dryden, Pope, Lessing, Schiller, is owing to the fact that he deals with life as a whole more powerfully than they, needs to be qualified. Probably a more one-sided, nature-dyed, egotistic poet never lived than Wordsworth. In all his poems he does not touch high-life, or town life, or social life. There is no humor, little passion and no drama in his poems. How, then, can he be said to be such an interpreter of life when he deals with only one side of life?

It is, therefore, not in his treatment of life, but in his sincerity, his treatment of the affections, his reverence for nature and his interest in the poor, where his greatness lies.

The student who has read the *Excursion* and the *Prelude* will not disagree with Arnold's warning in paragraphs twenty seven, twenty-eight and twenty-nine against praising Wordsworth as a philosopher. While there are some fine poetic passages in both poems, the philosophy could be stated much better in prose.

Arnold's restrictions in paragraph thirty on Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* are calm and sane. Almost all lovers of nature will agree not with Wordsworth but with Arnold in tracing their own love of the great out-doors, that it begins in childhood and becomes strong and operative at thirty.

That Wordsworth's scientific poetry which in para-

graphs thirty-one and thirty-two Arnold calls dull, is dull no one will deny; and that the following is one reason why Wordsworth's poetry is great

Wordsworth's poetry is great because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in simple elementary affections and duties, and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy and renders it so as to make us share it.

nearly every one will agree.

The source of this joy Arnold learns from Wordsworth is in nature where all may go and draw for it.

How ardent a lover of nature Arnold was himself the student may learn from volume two of his letters. They are filled with descriptions of mountains, maples, elms and flowers, and show how deeply he felt and loved scenery. Stockbridge, Mass., is definitely described, but, like a true Englishman, he thought the lovely lakes of England more beautiful than the Berkshires or any other part of America.

Again in paragraph thirty-four Arnold takes up the question of the inferior work of Wordsworth. That there is a wide difference between *The Sailor's Mother* and *Lucy Gray* is apparent to any lover of poetry. That Wordsworth inspired and Wordsworth uninspired were very unlike is not hard to believe. That at his best his poetry is inevitable (that is, full of spontaneity) is a truth every one accepts. In pointing out the foregoing Arnold shows that although he admires Wordsworth he is nevertheless able to see his faults and does not hesitate to say that what style Wordsworth has is both ponderous and pompous.

It is interesting to note in paragraphs thirty-five, thirty-six and thirty-seven that the influence of such poets as Milton and Burns on Wordsworth did not escape Arnold. There is no doubt that Wordsworth gained elevation from Milton and plainness from Burns without the latter's lyrical sweetness. Some critics even go so far as to give Burns credit for teaching Wordsworth the secrets of nature. But no one, as Arnold points out, can fail to see that Wordsworth's poetry has a sincerity, a naturalness and a grandeur about it, which that of Burns can never approach.

The balance in Wordsworth's best poems Arnold regards as unique, and in paragraph thirty-eight says that his *Laodameia*, the great ode, *Michael*, the *Fountain* and the *Highland Reaper* possess this quality.

Arnold once more in paragraph thirty-nine drives home his reason for Wordsworth's greatness as the goodness of his work and the large body of it. Again, he reviews the poets of Christendom and places Wordsworth where he belongs after such luminaries as Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, Milton and Goethe, for they are among the moderns, his only superiors.

Arnold's purpose is stated in paragraph forty as an attempt to show Wordsworth's power through a selection of his really great poems and to present them to the English-speaking public and to the world. That he did the poet an excellent service is evident. Wordsworth to-day holds the place suggested by his great critic. That his judgment will be reversed by time is possible but unlikely.

In the last paragraph, Arnold exhibits again, as he has done all through the essay, the characteristics which make him a great critic, such as disinterestedness, calm-

ness, justice, judicial balance, sincerity, tenderness and charm.

For students, the essay will serve as a stepping-stone to a further acquaintance with this master of style in such of his books as "Culture and Anarchy," "Essays in Criticism," "Friendship's Garland," "Mixed Essays" and "Letters." In all of them he will find that indescribable something which Arnold defines in one of the verses of "A Southern Night":

And what but gentleness untired
And what but noble feeling warm
Wherever shown, how e'er inspired,
Is grace, is charm.

**BURKE'S SPEECH ON CONCILIATION
ANALYZED**

BURKE'S SPEECH ON CONCILIATION WITH AMERICA ANALYZED

Your enjoyment of the Speech on Conciliation will be greatly increased if, as you read and master Burke's thoughts, you write out a plan something like the following:

PART I

is a leisurely introduction consisting of 45 paragraphs based on the logical statement that all proof should be founded upon the nature, peculiar circumstances, unusual conditions and situations of the question discussed. With this broad background Burke takes up such phases of the subject as:

1. The Return of the Grand Penal Bill from the House of Lords.
2. Burke's description of power as a trust.
3. The repeal of the Stamp Act of 1765.
4. The annoyance caused in America by Parliament's plan of peace.
5. A scheme for peace to be outlined by the party in power.
6. The relation of Burke's thoughts about governing the colonies in 1765.

7. The responsibility of a private citizen in a time of danger.

8. His account of his own attempt to restore order.

9. Peace that will restore the former unsuspecting confidence to the colonies in the mother country.

10. The simplicity of Burke's peace plan compared with Lord North's.

11. The admission by the House that peace is possible.

12. The attitude of the House concerning the complaints about its methods of taxing America.

13. The magnanimity of a great power in making concessions.

14. The peculiar circumstances in which America is placed.

15. America's population.

16. The futility of trifling with the interests and feelings of the colonists.

17. America's commerce.

18. A consideration of the question of America's commerce.

19. The importance of Davenant's statistics.

20. The export trade of the colonies.

21. The trade of England to the Colonies in 1772.

22. The trade of England with all three branches in 1772.

23. The twelvefold expansion of America's trade in 68 years.

24. England's trade with America alone in 1772.

25. Burke's ideas of the importance of the colonies.

26. The expansion of the trade with Pennsylvania.

27. The question of commerce with the colonies.

28. Agriculture.

29. The fisheries an additional circumstance to be considered relative to America.

30. The spirit of liberty.

31. America an object worth fighting for.

32. Force, only temporary.

33. Force, uncertain.

34. Force, a weak weapon.

35. Force, without any favorable experience.

36. The temper and character of the colonies a consideration to which Parliament must give its attention.

37. The Americans as lovers of freedom.

38. Their descent one cause of their fierce spirit of liberty.

39. Their government another cause of the fierce spirit of liberty.

40. Their religion.

41. The religion of the colonists.

42. Education, an influence upon this spirit of freedom.

43. Distance from England a reason why the colonists entertain a fierce spirit of liberty.

44. The six capital sources of the spirit of liberty.

45. The value of obedience, necessity and consent in governing a people.

PART II

His proof is condensed in 71 paragraphs brimful of historic citations and unanswerable arguments marshalled in such a masterly manner that they may be summarized according to paragraphs as follows:

46. This fierce spirit of liberty in America has formed a government sufficient for its purposes, without the bustle of revolution or the troublesome formality of an election.

47. Punishing the colonists through the plan of denying the exercise of government does not bring about anarchy or submission in America. The colony of Massachusetts has subsisted in health and vigor for near a twelvemonth without governor, without public council, without judges, without executive magistrates. England cannot even gain a paltry advantage over the Americans

without attacking some of those principles for which Englishmen have shed their blood.

48. There are but three ways of proceeding relative to the fierce spirit of liberty in the colonies:

1. To change that spirit as inconvenient by removing the causes.
2. To prosecute it as a criminal.
3. To comply with it as necessary.

49. The first of these plans is impractical.

50. One reason why it is impractical is you cannot stop the population by checking land grants.

51. If England ceases to grant land, the colonists will settle without grant.

52. The policy of hedging in population is neither prudent nor practical.

53. It is folly to impoverish the colonies in general and in particular to arrest the noble course of their marine enterprises.

54. The temper and character which prevail in the colonies is unalterable by any human art. An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery. England cannot change the descent of the colonists.

55. England cannot change their religion, their education, or their government.

56. It would be impractical to free the slaves.

57. Slaves would suspect the offer of freedom from those who enslaved them.

58. England cannot pump the ocean dry.

59. As long as it is impossible to remove the causes it will be necessary to try to prosecute the spirit as criminal.

60. One reason why to prosecute the spirit as criminal

will not do is because it is impossible to draw up an indictment against a whole people.

61. Another is that it is not treason to deny the authority of a government in certain cases.

62. A third objection to prosecuting the spirit as criminal is that England cannot be both judge and litigant in the same case.

63. A fourth objection is that it is not expedient, for it is difficult to apply judicial ideas to a case like America's.

64. The plan of coercing the colonies is not correctly right.

65. One method is left to comply with the spirit as necessary.

66. The colonies complain that they have not the characteristic mark and seal of British freedom, that they are taxed in a Parliament in which they are not represented. If England satisfies them at all, she must satisfy them with regard to this complaint.

67. It is not a question whether England has a right to make her colonists miserable, but whether it is not to her interest to make them happy.

68. To give concord and peace to the empire England will have to govern her colonies according to the principles of freedom.

69. Burke believes it is England's duty whether as a matter of right or grant as a matter of favor to admit the people of her colonies into an interest in the Constitution and to record that admission in the Journals of Parliament as a strong assurance of her purpose to recognize that interest forever.

70. The repeal of the Stamp Act brought about peace but this new attempt to tax the colonists will make them suspicious.

71. The real fear of the opposers of Burke's plan is not that repeal will make taxes heavier in England but that if the repeal is granted it will cause the Americans to demand further concessions.

72. The trade laws are no excuse for not taxing the colonies. The colonies, according to Lord North, trade with England because they find that their trade with the mother country is profitable.

73. The argument that if England repeals the taxes she will have also to repeal the trade laws is absurd.

74. The revenue plan and the trade laws are separately admitted to be of no value and yet England wishes to keep up revenue laws which are mischievous, to preserve trade laws which are useless.

75. The origin of the quarrel with America was not the trade laws but taxation.

76. Authority is not lost even if it is not pushed to the extreme.

77. Fears, suspicious conjectures, divinations, ought not to prevent conciliatory concession.

78. Burke advises the Commons to do what England has done in similar cases all through her history—conciliate.

79. In the English Constitution he found four capital examples favoring conciliation—Ireland, Wales, Chester and Durham.

80. Ireland was troublesome before she was given representation.

81. Wales also was fierce and dangerous until she was given an interest in the Constitution.

82. The case of Wales was almost parallel with that of America.

83. Precedents such as the foregoing should be useful to Parliament.

84. The tyranny of a free people could of all tyrannies be least endured. It took England two hundred years to learn that making laws against a whole nation was not the most effectual way to secure obedience.

85. Chester was almost as vexing a problem as Wales.

86. Parliament passed an act of redress which at once softened the people of Chester.

87. Durham was, in the reign of Charles II, treated as Chester had been and was given the right to be represented.

88. If virtual representation was not good enough for Wales, Chester and Durham, how can England expect America to endure it?

89. As representation in Parliament is impractical, Burke suggests that a substitute may be found.

90. The ancient constitutional policy of England gives the substitute.

91. Let the colonists tax themselves in their own colonial assemblies by grant and not by imposition.

92. Burke proposes his six fundamental propositions.

93. The first resolution is that the colonies of England in North America are not represented in Parliament.

94. The second is that the said colonies are taxed by Parliament although they are not represented in that body.

95. The language of these resolutions is copied from the ancient acts of Parliament.

96. Burke cites tax laws and the repeal of tax laws proving that the colonies were taxed and grieved by Parliament.

97. The third resolution is that no method has been

provided for procuring representation in Parliament for the said colonists.

98. The fourth resolution states that each of the said colonies has an assembly which has powers to raise, levy and assess taxes.

99. The competency of the assemblies to grant taxes to the Crown has been a fact for nearly a century though some declare that none but the British Parliament can grant to the Crown.

100. The fifth resolution is that grants have been made by these colonies and have been acknowledged by Parliament.

101. Burke proves here that the colonies have been reimbursed by Parliament for expenses assumed by them in the taking of the Island of Cape Breton and its dependencies.

102. Burke produces a letter of the King to Parliament commending the zeal and vigor of the faithful subjects in the colonies and suggests that some suitable reward may be made to the colonies.

103. Burke shows that Parliament did vote money to the colonies as an encouragement to exert themselves with vigor.

104. Parliament has acknowledged that the colonies not only gave but gave to satiety.

105. The Journals of Parliament are eloquent about *revenue* by *grant* but are silent regarding *revenue* by *imposition*.

106. Burke's sixth resolution is that revenue by grant is more agreeable to the colonies and more serviceable to Parliament than revenue by imposition.

107. These resolutions prove that there is in each of the colonies a body competent to grant taxes, that Parlia-

ment has no excuse for imposing disagreeable taxes upon them, and that Parliament cannot say that the colonies have neglected their duty.

108. Parliament must decide whether it wishes the colonist to be satisfied or discontented.

109. Parliament should repeal the revenue law passed in the seventh year of George III.

110. Parliament ought to repeal the bill closing the Port of Boston.

111. Parliament should repeal the act revoking the charter of Massachusetts Bay Colony.

112. Parliament should repeal the obnoxious act which took from the colonial courts the right to try English soldiers charged with murder committed in the performance of duty.

113. Parliament should amend the act of Henry VIII relating to the trial of treasons.

114. Parliament should give the colonies a fair and unbiased judicature.

115. Parliament should regulate the Courts of Admiralty in the colonies.

116. The Admiralty Court should be made more accessible so as not to deny justice to its litigants.

117. If Parliament passes the first six resolutions it cannot reject the latter three. Burke hopes that even the rejection of the three will not prevent a permanent peace.

PART III

It would be difficult to find in all literature arguments so varied, so subtle and so logical as those in the next nineteen paragraphs which form Burke's refutation.

118. One objection to his preamble of the Chester

Act is that the colonies will not only object to taxation but to all legislation by Parliament.

119. Burke replies that the object of the grievance in his resolution was not taken from Chester but the Durham Act which confines the hardship of want of representation to the case of subsidies and which, therefore, falls in exactly with the case of the colonies.

120. Burke declares that the colonies have not gone much beyond the demand of immunity from taxes, that it is not fair to judge them by what they say when they are disturbed or irritated, that men do not split hairs about trivial side issues and metaphysics; if they get the principle of what they are after they will compromise and barter.

121. Burke states that the Americans will have no interest except the grandeur and glory of England when not oppressed by it and that he has no fear of the destruction of the Empire by giving 2,000,000 of his fellow citizens a share in these rights he has cherished all his life.

122. In regard to the objection that if the American assemblies are allowed to grant money it will dissolve the unity of the Empire, Burke replies that it did not dissolve it in the case of Wales, Chester and Durham.

123. Burke takes up Lord North's plan.

124. It is a ransom by auction.

125. It would be fatal to the Constitution.

126. It does not answer the complaint of the colonies.

127. Unless it is universally accepted by the colonies, it will cause endless difficulties.

128. It will create the science and art of confusion in reckoning the amount of tax to be placed on each colony.

129. It will give either no revenue through a perma-

ment quota or a new quarrel if at each change Parliament continually changes the amount of tax.

130. It does not provide for prompt payment.

131. Its object is to break the union of the colonies.

132. Compared with Burke's it has the following objections:

a. It is harsh.

b. It is a new project.

c. It is hazardous.

d. It is a mere matter of bargain and sale.

133. The best revenue in the world is revenue by *grant*.

134. Parties will be anxious to conciliate the Government because it is only through the Government they can get the measures passed which will give them power and prestige.

135. It is unjust to obtain revenue either by ransom or by compounding debts and such a method of taxing is the worst economy in the world.

136. America ought not to be exploited as India was but should be reserved to a war in her quarter of the globe where she may give England essential service.

PART IV

In a great peroration of four paragraphs Burke shows his eloquence, his patriotism, his knowledge of human nature and his wonderful conception of harmony and peace.

137. England must hold the colonies if she holds them at all through common ties, common interests and by granting them civil rights.

138. It not her laws or her army or her navy but the love and obedience of her citizens which makes England great.

139. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom, and a great empire and little minds go ill together.

140. Burke lays the first stone of the temple of peace.

BURKE'S SPEECH ON CONCILIATION WITH AMERICA ANALYZED

The object of this analysis is not only to aid students in understanding the great political principles set forth in the speech but also give them an introduction to the greatness of Burke, to have them understand this famous conservative statesman, to teach them to absorb some of his veneration for the past, to point out to them the dangers of innovation, to show them the advantage of peace, to picture to them the value of patriotism and to make them see the benefits derived from constitutional government. If the author can induce his youthful readers to consult such of Burke's works as the "Speech on American Taxation," his "Letters to the Sheriffs of Bristol," his "Letter to a Noble Lord," his "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful," his "Reflections on the French Revolution," and his "Letters on a Regicide Peace," he thinks they will be amply repaid, for the man who is reflected in the following is worthy of their consideration:

SPEECH ON THE REJECTION BY BRISTOL

"Gentlemen," said he, in summing up, "I do not here stand before you accused of venality, or of neglect of duty. It is not said that in the long period of my service, I have, in a single instance, sacrificed the slightest of your interests to my ambition or to my fortune. It is not alleged that to gratify any anger, or revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a share in wronging or oppressing any

description of men, or any man in any description. No! the charges against me are all of one kind—that I have pushed the principles of general justice and benevolence too far; further than a cautious policy would warrant; and further than the opinions of many would go along with me.—In every accident that may happen through life, in pain, in sorrow, in depression, and distress—I will call to mind this accusation, and be comforted.”—*Prior's Life of Burke.*

PART I

In paragraph one the sentence, “We are therefore called upon, as it were, by a superior warning voice, again to attend to America; to attend to the whole of it together; and to review the subject with an unusual degree of care and calmness,” gives a picture of the thoughtful well-balanced statesman.

Fifteen years later, Burke developed this same idea in the following extract:

The true lawgiver ought to have a heart full of sensibility. He ought to love and respect his kind, and to fear himself. It may be allowed to his temperament to catch his ultimate object with an intuitive glance; but his movements towards it ought to be deliberate. Political arrangement, as it is a work for social ends, is to be only wrought by social means. There mind must conspire with mind. Time is required to produce that union of minds which alone can produce all the good we aim at. Our patience will achieve more than our force. If I might venture to appeal to what is so much out of fashion in Paris, I mean to experience, I should tell you, that in my course I have known, and, according to my measure, have co-operated with great men; and I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by observations of those who were much inferior in understanding to the person who

took the lead in the business. By a slow but well-sustained progress, the effect of each step is watched; the good or ill success of the first gives light to us in the second; and so, from light to light, we are conducted with safety through the whole series. We see that the parts or the system do not clash. The evils latent in the most promising contrivances are provided for as they arise. One advantage is as little as possible sacrificed to another. We compensate, we reconcile, we balance. We are enabled to unite into a consistent whole the various anomalies and contending principles that are found in the minds and affairs of men. From hence arises, not an excellence in simplicity, but one far superior, an excellence in composition. Where the great interests of mankind are concerned through a long succession of generations, that succession ought to be admitted into some share in the councils which are so deeply to affect them. If justice requires this, the work itself requires the aid of more minds than one age can furnish. It is from this view of things that the best legislators have been often satisfied with the establishment of some sure, solid, and ruling principle in government; a power like that which some of the philosophers have called a plastic nature; and having fixed the principle, they have left it afterwards to its own operation.

To proceed in this manner, that is, to proceed with a presiding principle, and a prolific energy, is with me the criterion of profound wisdom.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

From paragraph two the student can learn the importance of preparation. In Burke's vocabulary the word *circumstances* was the key to his method of attacking a subject. When he was asked by a member of the National Assembly in France to suggest a course of action for the leaders during the revolution in that country, note the following lucid reasons he gives for declining:

Permit me to say that if I were as confident as I ought to be diffident in my own loose general ideas, I never should venture to broach them, if but at twenty leagues' distance from the center of your affairs. I must see with my own eyes; I must in a manner touch with my own hands, not only the fixed, but momentary circumstances, before I could venture to suggest any political project whatsoever. I must know the power and disposition to accept, to execute, to preserve. I must see all the aids and all the obstacles. I must see the means of correcting the plan, where correctives would be wanted. I must see the things; I must see the men. Without a concurrence and adaptation of these to the design, the very best speculative projects might become not only mischievous but useless. Plans must be made for men. People at a distance must judge ill of men. They do not always answer to their reputation when you approach them. Nay, the perspective varies, and shows them quite other than you thought them. At a distance, if we judge uncertainly of men, we must judge worse of *opportunities*, which continually vary their shapes and colors, and pass away like clouds.—
Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.

That constancy and fidelity to principle and belief was a firm characteristic of Burke's character can be learned not only from paragraph three but also from the following:

LIBERTY AN INHERITANCE

You will observe, that from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties, as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves a unity in so great a di-

versity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and a House of Commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

Paragraph four, picturing Burke as a hater of anarchy and a lover of peace is excellent. But the passage below written in his old age on the French Revolution also tells how fearful he was that such confusion as France was battling with should ever gain a foothold in his beloved England.

Laws overturned; tribunals subverted; industry without vigour; commerce expiring; the revenue unpaid, yet the people impoverished; a church pillaged, and a state not relieved; civil and military anarchy made the constitution of the kingdom; everything human and divine sacrificed to the idol of public credit, and national bankruptcy the consequence; and, to crown all, the paper securities of new, precarious, tottering power, the discredited paper securities of impoverished fraud and beggared rapine, held out as a currency for the support of an empire, in lieu of the two great recognized species that represent the lasting, conventional credit of mankind, which disappeared and hid themselves in the earth from whence they came, when the principle of property, whose creatures and representatives they are, was systematically subverted.

For the student the chief interest in paragraphs five, six, seven and eight is the account Burke gives of the manner in which he proceeds in evolving his system of government for the colonies. To him, also, Burke's system has an additional interest, for although it was not adopted at the time, it is now the method by which England rules the greatest colonial empire on earth.

Paragraph nine shows Burke's knowledge of human nature. In 1765, by the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act, he had seen the colonies place their confidence again in England; and relying on that precedent, he proposes to have them return once more to the fold.

Burke's frankness in paragraph ten cannot be too much commended. That genuine simplicity of heart is a healing and cementing principle was as true at Locarno as it was the day Burke placed it in his great speech. It is also just as true today as at that time that plain good intention is no mean force in the government of mankind. He knew that if England wanted her subjects to obey her she should show that she meant to give them fair treatment.

That peace is admissible by Lord North's plan is stated by Burke in paragraphs eleven and twelve. From this fact he proceeds to hope for a settlement but he hopes that it will come in the right way—the way his ancestors would have brought it about.

This plea of Burke's to apply the rule of ancestors to everything runs through all of his works and with him it is a working principle. Note the extract taken from "An Appeal from the Old to the New Whigs":

It is this, that if ever we should find ourselves disposed not to admire those writers or artists, Livy and Virgil for instance, Raphael or Michael Angelo, whom all the learned had admired, not to follow our own fancies, but to study them until we know how and what we ought to admire; and if we cannot arrive at this combination of admiration with knowledge, rather to believe that we are dull, than that the rest of the world has been imposed on. It is as good a rule, at least, with regard to this admired constitution. We ought to understand it according to our

measure; and to venerate where we are not able presently to comprehend.

Such admirers were our fathers, to whom we owe this splendid inheritance. Let us improve it with zeal, but with fear. Let us follow our ancestors, men not without a rational, though without an exclusive, confidence in themselves; who, by respecting the reasons of others, who, by looking backward as well as forward, by the modesty as well as by the energy of their minds, went on, insensibly drawing this constitution nearer and nearer to its perfection, by never departing from its fundamental principles, nor introducing any amendment which had not a subsisting root in the laws, constitution, and usages of the kingdom. Let those who have the trust of political or of natural authority ever keep watch against the desperate enterprises of innovation: let even their benevolence be fortified and armed.

That Burke was not a narrow, contracted, selfish, pig-headed statesman, the student can readily see who reads in paragraph thirteen:

Reconciliation does, in a manner, always imply concession on one part or on the other. In this state of things I make no difficulty in affirming that the proposal ought to originate from us. Great and acknowledged force is not impaired either in effect or in opinion by an unwillingness to exert itself * * * Such an offer from such a power will be attributed to magnanimity.

His own magnanimity towards the colonist is evident in the accompanying extract from "An Address to the British Colonists in North America."

No circumstances of fortune, you may be assured, will ever induce us to form, or tolerate, any such design. If the disposition of Providence (which we deprecate) should even prostrate you at our feet,

broken in power and in spirit, it would be our duty and inclination to revive, by every practical means, that free energy of mind, which a fortune unsuitable to your virtue had damped and dejected; and to put you voluntarily in possession of those very privileges which you had in vain attempted to assert by arms. For we solemnly declare, that although we should look upon a separation from you as a heavy calamity (and the heavier, because we know you must have your full share in it), yet we had much rather see you totally independent of this Crown and kingdom, than joined to it by so unnatural a conjunction as that of freedom with servitude:—a conjunction which, if it were at all practicable, could not fail in the end of being more mischievous to the peace, prosperity, greatness, and power of this nation, than beneficial, by an enlargement of the bounds of nominal empire.

The fourteenth is a great paragraph. It warns the Commons that they cannot govern the colonies by abstract notions of right and gives the student at once an idea of the complex circumstances, the million and one elements which make up government.

Some of Burke's great contributions to political history are his ideas of government. A few of his maxims are worth committing to memory.

(a) Circumstances and habits of a country determine the form of its government.

He has never professed himself a friend or an enemy to republics or to monarchies in the abstract. *He thought that the circumstances and habits of every country, which it is always perilous and productive of the greatest calamities to force, are to decide upon the form of its government.* There is nothing in his nature, his temper, or his faculties, which should make him an enemy to any republic

modern or ancient.—*An Appeal from the Old to the New Whigs.*

(b) The Function of Opinion.

As all *government stands upon opinion*, they know that the way utterly to destroy it is to remove that opinion, to take away all reverence, all confidence from it; and then, at the first blast of public discontent and popular tumult, it tumbles to the ground.—*Speech on Reform of Representation in the Commons of Parliament.*

(c) Character of a Free Government.

If there be one fact in the world perfectly clear it is this: "*That the disposition of the people of America is wholly averse to any other than a free government*"; and this is indication enough to any honest statesman, how he ought to adapt whatever power he finds in his hands to their case. If any ask me what a free government is, I answer, that, for any practical purpose, it is what the people think so; and that they, and not I, are the natural, lawful, and competent judges of this matter. If they practically allow me a greater degree of authority over them than is consistent with any correct ideas of perfect freedom, I ought to thank them for so great a trust, and not to endeavour to prove from thence, that they have reasoned amiss, and that having gone so far, by analogy, they must hereafter have no enjoyment but by my pleasure.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

In paragraphs fifteen and sixteen Burke mentions population as an important circumstance relating to America. He tells his countrymen that there are 2,000,000 whites and 500,000 blacks in the colonies—a number not to be trifled with.

As a far-seeing statesman later in "Observations on a

Late Publication on the Present State of the Nation," he tells his countrymen that North America was a great strength to England in opportunity of ports, in ships, in provisions, in men. Delving as he did to the bottom of the question, he knew the value of America more than any other Englishman.

Commerce is another circumstance whose importance to England Burke makes so clear that it is difficult now to see why in a nation of traders he did not carry everything before him. In paragraphs seventeen to twenty-nine, with the exception of the digression about Lord Bathurst's vision in twenty-five, the orator makes the story of England's commerce with America as interesting as a novel and a veritable gold mine to England.

There is in these paragraphs on commerce a remarkable lesson for students who expect to enter the service of the government. Imagine the amount of reading these clear statements required. The novice in statesmanship after reading this vivid account of England's commerce with the colonies can easily understand what Burke meant in his "Letter to a Noble Lord" when he said:

My merits, whatever they are, are original and personal. * * * I was not, like his Grace of Bedford, swaddled and rocked and dandled into a legislator: *Nitor in adversum* is the motto for a man like me. I possessed not one of the qualities, nor cultivated one of the arts, that recommend men to the favor and protection of the great. * * * At every step of my progress in life (for in every step was I traversed and opposed), and at every turnpike I met, I was obliged to show my passport, and again and again to prove my sole title to the honor of being useful to my country by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with its laws and the whole system of its interests both abroad and at home.

How highly he regarded commerce may be gleaned from the following excerpt:

The other source of our power is commerce, of which you are so large a part, and which cannot exist, no more than your liberty, without a connexion with many virtues. It has ever been a very particular and a very favourite object of my study, in its principles, and in its details. I think many here are acquainted with the truth of what I say. This I know, that I have ever had my house open, and my poor services ready, for traders and manufacturers of every denomination.—*Speech at his arrival at Bristol.*

Agriculture is the circumstance which the statesman pointed out to his hearers in paragraph twenty-nine. Had they heeded his arguments it is altogether probable that their posterity would never have had to fight a world war. A country with a colony as populous, as resourceful as America could almost keep the world at peace.

Fisheries, the wealth the colonists derived from the sea, is a circumstance in the thirtieth paragraph Burke eloquently described to his countrymen, but in vain. Neither did his reference to their hardiness, their bravery, their enterprise and their sagacity have any effect upon those dull representatives of a nation of traders.

Burke, however, like Addison before the tombs in the Abbey, reflects on the virtues of these men, their neglect by their government and in paragraph thirty-one pardons something to their spirit of liberty.

In paragraph thirty-seven, summing up his reasons for not desiring to use force against the colonist, he reminds the Commons that there is another circumstance, the temper and character of the Americans, which they must

consider in the management of this people before they determine the sort of policy they are going to pursue.

That this question of temper was an important one with Burke in studying a people can readily be believed from the depth and wisdom of the following extract:

Government is deeply interested in everything which, even through the medium of some temporary uneasiness, may tend finally to compose the minds of the subject, and to conciliate their affections. I have nothing to do here with the abstract value of the voice of the people. But as long as reputation, the most precious possession of every individual, and as long as opinion, the great support of the state, depend entirely upon that voice, it can never be considered as a thing of little consequence either to individuals or to governments. *Nations are not primarily ruled by law; less by violence. Whatever original energy may be supposed either in force or regulation, the operation of both is, in truth, merely instrumental. Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or his superiors; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it; I mean,—when public affairs are steadily and quietly conducted: not when government is nothing but a continued scuffle between the magistrate and the multitude; in which sometimes the one and sometimes the other is uppermost; in which they alternately yield and prevail, in a series of contemptible victories and scandalous submissions. The temper of the people amongst whom he presides ought therefore to be the first study of a statesman. And the knowledge of this temper it is by no means impossible for him to attain, if he has not an interest in being ignorant of what it is his duty to learn.—Thoughts on the Present Discontents.*

In paragraphs thirty-two to thirty-seven, Burke pleads for prudence instead of force and after showing that a people so numerous, so active, so growing and so spirited may be preserved for England in a profitable and subordinate connection, declares that force is only temporary, that it is uncertain, that it impairs the object, and that there is no experience in its favor.

After the war started, Burke pictured the advocates of force and also recorded his honest pride in his efforts to stop the war in the following passage:

A conscientious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood. He would feel some apprehension at being called to a tremendous account for engaging in *so deep a play, without any sort of knowledge of the game.* It is no excuse for presumptuous ignorance, that it is *directed by insolent passion.* *The poorest being* that crawls on earth, contending to save itself from injustice and oppression, is an object respectable in the eyes of God and man. But I cannot conceive any existence under heaven (which, in the depths of its wisdom, tolerates all sorts of things) that is more truly odious and disgusting, than an *impotent, helpless creature, without civil wisdom or military skill, without a consciousness of any other qualification for power but his servility to it, bloated with pride and arrogance, calling for battles which he is not to fight, contending for a violent dominion which he can never exercise, and satisfied to be himself mean and miserable, in order to render others contemptible and wretched.*

If you and I find our talents not of the great and ruling kind, our conduct, at least, is conformable to our faculties. No man's life pays the forfeit of our rashness. No desolate widow weeps tears of blood over our ignorance. Scrupulous and sober in our well-grounded distrust of ourselves, we would keep in the port of peace and security; and perhaps in

recommending to others something of the same diffidence, we should show ourselves more charitable in their welfare, than injurious to their abilities.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

That the predominating passion of the colonists is a love of freedom is stated by Burke in paragraph thirty-eight. This passion, he says, generates into fierceness whenever these people see the least attempt to wrest from them either by force or by underhand methods the only advantage worth living for.

How well the orator understood the colonies, their aims, ambitions, the value of common names, common descent and love of freedom, is proven not only in this paragraph, but in the next seven in which he shows the variety of powerful causes behind this spirit of liberty. His own method of dealing with the case of the colonies is set forth as follows:

These were the considerations, gentlemen, which led me early to think, that, in the comprehensive dominion which the *Divine Providence* had put into our hands, instead of troubling our understandings with speculations concerning the unity of empire, and the identity or distinction of legislative powers, and inflaming our passions with the heat and pride of controversy, it was our duty, in all soberness, to conform our government to the character and circumstances of the several people who composed this mighty and strangely diversified mass. I never was wild enough to conceive that one method would serve for the whole; that the natives of Hindostan and those of Virginia could be ordered in the same manner; or that the Cutchery court and the grand jury of Salem could be regulated on a similar plan. I was persuaded that government was a practical thing, made for the happiness of mankind, and not to furnish out a spectacle of uniformity, to gratify the

schemes of visionary politicians. Our business was to rule, not to wrangle; and it would have been a poor compensation that we had triumphed in a dispute, whilst we lost an empire.—Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.

In paragraph thirty-nine the student will meet what is generally considered the most difficult paragraph in the speech. No learner, however, will find it troublesome if he will follow Burke's method. No statesman ever lived who followed principles as consistently as Burke follows them. Here, he has before him the acts of his ancestors—ancestors who made possible the great *English* constitution—ancestors who adored their freedom—ancestors who declared that kings were made for the people, not the people for kings—ancestors who did not feel themselves free unless they controlled their own money and paid their own taxes without imposition—ancestors who found the right to tax themselves the test of liberty—ancestors who gave the world the House of Commons—ancestors who gave the same rights to Englishmen in the colonies as Englishmen in England.

It is difficult for Englishmen of today not to be influenced by the burning glow of this paragraph. They, however, cannot approve of it as a whole because what Burke considered a "people" was not the whole nation, but only a selected portion of the strong, the wealthy and the wise. The remainder, the weak and the ignorant, were to him the satisfied followers who trudged along without giving any trouble because they felt an all-wise Providence had willed that their betters should rule.

The student should remember that Burke was never in sympathy with the rule of the multitude which is the glory of England today. To the last of his life he opposed reform and died believing that the English consti-

tution, as he knew it, was as near perfect as anything human could be.

In paragraph forty, the student should be careful how he interprets such phrases as "popular," "merely popular," "popular representative" and the "share of the people in their ordinary government." Even as late as 1790 there were, says Woodrow Wilson in his *History of the American People*, "probably not more than one hundred and twenty thousand men who had the right to vote out of the four million inhabitants enumerated in the first census." The same authority states:

Under the laws of the colonies only a minority of the adult male residents in each community had been allowed to vote,—those who held some not inconsiderable amount of property; and still fewer had been allowed to hold office,—the ownership of a still larger amount of property being prescribed as a qualification for candidates for political office. * * * It was still necessary that every voter should be a freeholder or the possessor of an estate of say fifty pounds value or at least a taxpayer.

By "merely popular," Burke means altogether popular and refers to Rhode Island and Connecticut, because the voters, the select few, not the entire male population, elected all their officers from the highest to the lowest.

To Burke, remember, a government was popular when it was controlled by a small and select number of property owners. His ideas on this point are clearly stated in the following quotation:

We have not considered as we ought the dreadful energy of a state, in which the property has nothing to do with the government. Reflect, my dear Sir, reflect again and again, on a government, in which the property is in complete subjection, and where nothing rules but the mind of desperate men. The condition

of a commonwealth not governed by its property was a combination of things, which the learned and ingenious speculator Harrington, who has tossed about society into all forms, never could imagine to be possible.—*Letter 2 on a Regicide Peace.*

Paragraph forty-one is interesting. It gives a definition of the principle of religion, the history of religion, an account of the dislike of Protestants for absolute government, the ground on which the dissenting churches base their opposition, and a statement of their assertion of natural liberty.

What Burke thought of religion as principle of government can easily be learned from the following:

“We know, and what is better we feel inwardly that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and all comfort.—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

How he regarded natural liberty is very tersely expressed in the extract given below:

Everybody is satisfied, that a conservation and secure enjoyment of our natural rights is the great and ultimate purpose of civil society; and that therefore all forms whatsoever of government are only good as they are subservient to that purpose to which they are entirely subordinate. Now, to aim at the establishment of any form of government by sacrificing what is the substance of it; to take away, or at least to suspend, the rights of nature, in order to an approved system for the protection of them; and, for the sake of that about which men must dispute for ever, to postpone those things about which they have no controversy at all, and this not in minute and subordinate, but large and principal, objects, is a procedure as preposterous and absurd in argument as it is oppressive and cruel in its effect.—Tract on Popery Laws.

Slavery, though it seems a paradox, Burke states, in paragraph forty-two, is a cause of the spirit of liberty. He proves his case by showing that slave owners regard freedom not only as an enjoyment but as a kind of rank and privilege and by pointing out that conscious mastery over others combines with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it and renders it invincible.

That Burke had advanced beliefs about education will be a conclusion readily reached by the student who reads paragraph forty-three. His assertion that the law was a general study in the colonies and that according to General Gage all the people in Massachusetts were either lawyers or smatterers in law speaks well for the people of that colony. Nor was Burke wrong in saying that this study made men acute, inquisitive, dexterous, prompt in attack, ready in defense, full of resources. In the war that followed, Massachusetts gave four sons, John Hancock, James Otis, Samuel and John Adams, who certainly were excellent products of the study of law.

As in many other subjects Burke had modern ideas about education. In the Impeachment of Warren Hastings, Speech in Reply, Eighth day, he defines education:

What is the education of the generality of the world? Reading a parcel of books? No. Restraint of discipline, emulation, examples of virtues and of justice form the education of the world."

Distance, the subject of paragraph forty-four and the last cause of the spirit of liberty considered by Burke, differs from the other five in that it is beyond the power of either England or the Colonists to change. In his own day Burke was undoubtedly right in saying that power in large bodies is feeble at the extremities. Today, however, through cable, telegraph, fast ships, airplanes, a strong

ministry gets as much obedience in India as it does in London and it is as easy to rule an extensive and detached empire as a small state.

In paragraph forty-five, Burke closes his introduction by repeating the six causes of the spirit of liberty. Mildly, he points out the growth of this spirit and the danger it has caused through meeting with an exercise of lawful authority on the part of England, which it defies.

Unusual Words and Phrases in Part I

PARAGRAPH 1:

austerity—strictness employed in maintaining order
bill—the Grand Penal Bill was designed to confine
the trade of the New England Colonies to Great
Britain, Ireland and the British West Indies;
and to restrict their fishing privileges on the
Grand Banks

incongruous—unrelated

Coercion—the attempt to break American resistance

PARAGRAPH 2:

indispensable—necessary

PARAGRAPH 5:

vicissitudes—changes

PARAGRAPH 6:

impotence—without power

PARAGRAPH 8:

adventitious—on account of rank or station

pruriency—itching

PARAGRAPH 9:

labyrinth—maze

juridical determination—settlement not by the intention of the law but by the letter of it

PARAGRAPHS 10:

project—Lord North's plan

The resolution is as follows: "That when the governor, council, or assembly, or general court, of any of his Majesty's provinces or colonies in America, shall propose to make provision, according to the condition, circumstances, and situation of such province or colony, for contributing their proportion to the common defense (such proportion to be raised under the authority of the general court or general assembly of such province or colony, and disposable by Parliament), and shall engage to make provision also for the support of the civil government and the administration of justice, in such province or colony, it will be proper, if such proposal shall be approved by his Majesty and the two Houses of Parliament, and for so long as such provision shall be made accordingly, to forbear, in respect of such province or colony, to levy any duty, tax, or assessment, or to impose any further duty, tax or assessment, except such duties as it may be expedient to continue to levy or impose, for regulation of commerce; the net produce of the duties last mentioned to be carried to the account of such province or colony respectively."

PARAGRAPH 13:

magnanimity—greatness

PARAGRAPH 16:

minima—paltry

impunity—without harm

PARAGRAPH 24:

protuberance—a bulging or swelling

PARAGRAPH 25:

seminal—a germ

PARAGRAPH 30:

antipodes—Southern seas

equinoctial—pertaining to the equator where the
days and nights are equal

sagacity—wisdom

PARAGRAPH 38:

chicane—an underhand method

PARAGRAPH 39:

abstractions—theoretical reasoning

parchments—charters

corollaries—derived conclusions

PARAGRAPH 41:

dissidence of dissent—dissent carried as far as it
will go

PARAGRAPH 42:

Gothic ancestors—as used by Burke the Saxons who
came from the north of Germany

PARAGRAPH 43:

Blackstone's Commentaries—celebrated book on the
law of real property used formerly in the study
of law

PART II

Proof

Paragraph forty-six deserves careful study. Burke here first expresses his great idea that obedience makes government. What makes him great is the expression of concentrated wisdom about government scattered through his works such as:

(a) If there is any one eminent criterion, which, above all the rest, distinguishes a wise government from an administration weak and improvident, it is

this;—"well to know the best time and manner of yielding what it is impossible to keep."—*Speech on the Economical Reform.*

(b) *The great use of government is as a restraint and there is no restraint which it ought to put upon others, and upon itself too rather than that which is imposed on the fury of speculating under circumstances of irritation.—Thoughts and Details on Scarcity.*

The forms of government and the persons who administer it all originate from the people.—Thoughts on the Present Discontents.

The importance of paragraph forty-seven arises from the fact that Burke realized that if the government were successful in depriving Americans of their rights, the principles for which Englishmen had shed their blood would again be attacked at home and his own generation would have to fight another glorious revolution.

In paragraph forty-eight, Burke returns to a consideration of the spirit of liberty, and concludes that the three ways to pursue regarding that spirit are: to change the spirit as inconvenient by removing the causes; to prosecute it as criminal, or to comply with it as necessary.

The first of these, to change the spirit as inconvenient, he considers in paragraphs forty-nine to fifty-nine and decides that it is impractical, for the following reasons:

1. If England stops the land grants, the colonists will occupy without grants.
2. It is not wise to hedge in a people.
3. It would be spiting herself for England to impoverish the colonies, for even in their weakness the colonists might be strong enough at some critical time to bring about her ruin.
4. The temper and character of the colonists is unalterable by any human act. An Englishman is

the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery.

5. England cannot change the religion of the colonists.

6. She cannot alter their education.

7. She cannot change their government.

8. It would be folly for her to free their slaves.

9. Nor can she pump the ocean dry.

Burke takes up the second method to prosecute the spirit as criminal, examines it in paragraphs fifty-nine to sixty-six and declares that there is no way to draw up an indictment against a whole people, that it is not treason to deny the authority of the government, that England cannot be judge in her own cause, that it is not expedient and that coercion is not the right remedy.

In paragraph sixty-six Burke expounds what he mentioned in paragraph fourteen of the introduction—what England ought to concede. Here, the student again can see the statesman's wisdom. He can understand how the orator felt toward the chicane in Lord North's project, how he would act to please a people and what he thought was the best method of giving satisfaction.

In years later he went further and proposed the sweeping concessions named in the passage quoted:

It will be asked, if such was then my opinion of the mode of pacification, how I came to be the very person who moved, not only for a repeal of all the late coercive statutes, but for mutilating, by a positive law, the entireness of the legislative power of parliament, and cutting off from it the whole right of taxation? I answer, because a different state of things requires a different conduct. When the dispute had gone to these last extremities, (which no man laboured more to prevent than I did,) the concessions which had satisfied in the beginning, could

satisfy no longer; because the violation of tacit faith required explicit security. The same cause which has introduced all formal compacts and covenants among men made it necessary. *I mean habits of soreness, jealousy, and distrust.* I parted with it, as with a limb; but as a limb to save the body; and I would have parted with more, if more *had been necessary; anything rather than a fruitless, hopeless, unnatural civil war.* This mode of yielding would, it is said, give way to independency, without a war. I am persuaded from the nature of things, and from every information, that it would have had a directly contrary effect. But if it had this effect, I confess that I should prefer independency without war, to independency with it; and I have so much *trust in the inclinations and prejudices of mankind, and so little in anything else, that I should expect ten times more benefit to this kingdom from the affection of America, though under a separate establishment, than from her perfect submission to the crown and parliament, accompanied with her terror, disgust, and abhorrence.* Bodies tied together by so unnatural a bond of union as mutual hatred, are only connected to their ruin.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

The student should study Burke's further treatment of concession in paragraphs sixty-seven, sixty-eight, sixty-nine and seventy with care. Note his appeal to humanity, reason, justice, generosity, instead of the lawyer-like assertion of bare right. Observe again how he stands on solid ground by invoking the principle that the *general character* and situation of a people must determine what sort of a government is fitted for them. Remember also that his concession is the concession the Americans ask—an interest in the Constitution recorded in the journals of Parliament.

That in Burke's mind the said interest was the gift of

gifts can be gleaned from reading his great eulogy on the English constitution.

This policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. *A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper, and confined views.* People will not look forward to posterity, who *never look backward to their ancestors.* Besides, the people of England well know, that the idea of inheritance furnishes a *sure principle of conservation, and a sure principle of transmission; without at all excluding a principle of improvement.* It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires. *Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims, are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement; grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever.* By a constitutional policy, working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit our government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. *The institutions of policy, the goods of fortune; the gifts of providence, are handed down to us, and from us, in the same course and order.* Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; *whercin, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but, in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression.* Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain, we are never wholly obsolete. *By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our*

forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.—Reflections on the Revolution in France.

That Burke is confident of restoring peace through this concession is stated in paragraph seventy by the analogy he draws from the repeal of the Stamp Act. His faith in this method is further enforced by the following extracts from his Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.

Therefore at the first fatal opening of this contest, the wisest course seemed to be to put an end as soon as possible to the immediate causes of the dispute; and to quiet a discussion, not easily settled upon clear principles, and arising from claims, which pride would permit neither party to abandon, by resorting as nearly as possible to the old, successful course. A mere repeal of the obnoxious tax, with a declaration of the legislative authority of this kingdom, was then fully sufficient to procure peace to *both sides*. Man is a creature of habit, and, the first breach being of very short continuance, the colonies fell back exactly into their ancient state. The congress has used an expression with regard to this pacification, which appears to me truly significant. After the repeal of the stamp act, "the colonies fell," says this assembly, "into their ancient state of *unsuspecting confidence in the mother country*." This unsuspecting confidence is the true centre of gravity amongst mankind, about which all the parts are at rest. It is this *unsuspecting confidence* that removes all difficulties, and reconciles all the contradictions which occur in

the complexity of all ancient, puzzled, political establishments. Happy are the rulers which have the secret of preserving it!

The eternal gratitude won by Lord Rockingham for repeal of the Stamp Act, 1766:

The whole empire has reason to remember, with eternal gratitude, the wisdom and temper of that man and his excellent associates, who, to recover this confidence, formed a plan of pacification in 1766. That plan, being built upon the nature of man, and the circumstances and habits of the two countries, and not on any visionary speculations, perfectly answered its end, as long as it was thought proper to adhere to it. Without giving a rude shock to the dignity (well or ill understood) of this parliament, they gave perfect content to our dependencies. Had it not been for the mediatorial spirit and talents of that great man, between such clashing pretensions and passions, we should then have rushed headlong (I know what I say), into the calamities of that civil war, in which, by departing from his system, we are at length involved; and we should have been precipitated into that war, at a time when circumstances both at home and abroad were far, very far, more unfavourable unto us than they were at the breaking out of the present troubles.—*Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*

In paragraphs seventy-one to seventy-eight Burke considers the stand taken by some of those who oppose *concession* by Parliament and finds that some fear that the colonists will attack the Trade Laws or the Navigation Acts, as they are called in school histories; that a few like Lord North believe that the Trade Laws have nothing to do with securing the American trade to England; but that when they are told it is unfair to add the burden of taxation to the burden of the trade laws and enrich

England by taxation as well as commercial monopoly, they reply that the taxation is to be kept up for the security of the laws of trade. That these commercial regulations are not the true cause of the quarrel, that it is imprudent to form a rule for punishing people, not on their own acts, but on governmental conjectures and that authority does not have to be pushed to the extreme to be effective are Burke's conclusions and in spite of all the suspicious conjectures and divinations about what the Americans may or may not do, he still hopes to obtain a concession which will bring peace to England and America.

In paragraphs seventy-eight and seventy-nine, the student will find the historical method of argument used by Burke. The orator is forever appealing to the precedents of his English ancestors. His reverence for them makes what they did sacred and holy. If he can find that they once argued a subject similar to the one he is considering, he stops then and there and at once adopts their methods and conclusions. With Burke, the English Constitution is perfect and everything in it, he regards as infallible.

The short sketch of the history of Ireland is interesting first because it shows Burke's extensive preparation for this speech and second, because its principles have recently been tested in Ireland and found true.

The student, however, should allow a little for the glowing imagination and the fervent eloquence of a native son when perusing this passage. Ireland flourished very little until England created the Free State. Even now her historic love for fighting is kept up through a quarrel between Ulster and the rest of the country which is taxing the patience of England.

The creation of the Free State, nevertheless, has done great things for Ireland, and the student should remem-

ber that in granting Ireland freedom, England has done only what Burke always advocated she should do for her colonies.

By analogy and citations from English history in paragraphs eighty-one, eighty-two, eighty-three and eighty-four, Burke draws from England's incorporation of Wales unanswerable arguments for concession and proves what may be expected if force is tried on the colonists.

In paragraphs eighty-five and eighty-six Burke shows that the grievances of the County Palatine of Chester was just as troublesome as Wales and Ireland until Parliament granted that county its petition for representation in Parliament.

The case of Durham, Burke considers in paragraph eighty-seven and shows that Parliament, following its own example in the case of Chester, found it was also wisdom to let the people of Durham have a voice in making all laws which related to their taxes.

What the Parliament of old found good for Ireland, Wales, Chester and Durham, the Parliament of 1775 cannot gracefully refuse America is Burke's logical conclusion in paragraph eighty-eight—a conclusion which he strengthens by showing that the Americans are as much Englishmen as the Welsh, that the colonists are ten times as numerous as the Welsh, and that if virtual representation was not sufficient for the freedom of Ireland, Wales, Chester and Durham, it is not sufficient for the freedom of a people as remote as the Americans.

The impracticability of Colonial representation in Parliament on account of the distance, his idea of finding a substitute for Parliamentary representation, the policy of Parliament in regard to representation down to 1763, his resolve to establish the equity and justice of taxation in

America by grant and not by imposition, his generous plan to mark the legal competency of the Colony Assemblies for the support of their Government in time of war, his desire to have Parliament admit that this legal competency has had a dutiful and beneficial exercise, his effort to get Parliament to state that experience has shown the benefit of Colonial grants, his plea to have Parliament place on record the futility of Parliamentary taxation as a method of supply; all these Burke considers in paragraphs eighty-nine to one hundred and nine and conclusively proves that his six resolutions, if adopted, will bring not only peace to England, but also, if wisely managed, in the future a lasting peace to America.

The student should give his careful attention to these twenty paragraphs. They contain a digest of the financial part the colonies played in King William's War, 1689-1697, Queen Anne's War, 1702-1713, King George's War, 1744-1748, and the French and Indian War, 1754-1763. That Burke's argument is irresistible no one can deny. The student should compare Burke's citing documentary proofs of the acts of the colonists with Lincoln's exhaustive array in his Cooper Union speech of the ways in which the thirty-nine members who signed the constitution voted at different times on the question of slavery. He should have no difficulty in forming a conclusion about the value of this method of proof since the speeches of both men are immortal.

Looking back over a vista of one hundred and fifty-one years, it is difficult to see how a Parliament could cast aside such arguments as are set forth in these paragraphs unless it deliberately chose, as Burke says, to give its subjects not enjoyment, but discontent.

Paragraphs one hundred and nine to one hundred and

eighteen picture Burke as the advocate of fair play, the hater of tyrannical laws, the relentless foe of corruption and the matchless champion of justice. The injustice of the Boston Port Bill in condemning the corporation of Boston before it was heard, the tyrannical use of power in taking away the charter of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, the obnoxious act of withdrawing from the civil courts of the colonies the right to try English soldiers charged with murder, the oppressive act relating to the trial of treasons, the judiciary, with judges having fixed salaries and holding office during good behaviour, the courts of admiralty, held in places not accessible, with judges interested in fees: all these Burke considers and shows how the repeal of unjust acts will aid peace as well as how a clean judiciary will benefit the colonies.

Unusual Words and Phrases

PARAGRAPH 46:

opereuse—laborious

infallible—unerring

PARAGRAPH 48:

pernicious—dangerous

PARAGRAPH 51:

English Tartars—a reference to the Asiatic tribes
who wasted Eastern Europe

PARAGRAPH 55:

inquisition—a Catholic court for the trial of heretics

dragooning—a drastic method of keeping down rebellion to authority by the employment of cavalrymen

PARAGRAPH 59:

alternative course—a system of changes to cure political troubles

PARAGRAPH 60:

Sir Edward Coke—noted English lawyer who aided
in the conviction of Sir Walter Raleigh

PARAGRAPH 61:

under the ban—to proclaim them rebels

PARAGRAPH 62:

civil litigant—one engaged in suits about rights not
about criminal offenses

PARAGRAPH 64:

menaces—threats

PARAGRAPH 66:

the characteristic mark and seal of British freedom—the rights of Englishmen

PARAGRAPH 67:

Serbonian bog—Lake Serbonis near the west
easterly mouth of the Nile

PARAGRAPH 71:

American financiers—Englishmen who still believed
that America could be made to yield a revenue
for England

PARAGRAPH 81:

Lord Marchers—noblemen who received large grants
of land for protecting the frontier

PARAGRAPH 85:

County Palatine of Chester—a county where the
lord had sovereign rights over his people the
same as a king

disherisons—deprivations

PARAGRAPH 88:

virtually represented—generally represented by Par-
liament

PARAGRAPH 90:

Republic of Plato—an ideal state

Utopia of More—also a perfect state

Oceana of Harrington—a work similar to both the preceding

PARAGRAPH 91:

public aids—grants of money by Parliament to the king

PARAGRAPH 109:

drawback—duties paid back if the goods were again exported

PARAGRAPH 110:

restraining bill—the grand penal bill

PARAGRAPH 111:

returning officier—the sheriff

PART III

In refuting the objections of his opponents to his plan of concession Burke is very much at home. Their first objection that if the colonists are granted power to tax themselves independent of Parliament, they will want to legislate for themselves on every subject without the direction of Parliament, he answers in paragraphs one hundred and eighteen, one hundred and nineteen, one hundred and twenty and one hundred and twenty-one by showing that it is not fair to judge men by what they say when they are angry, that it is a great mistake to suspect men who get the main part of their demands of splitting hairs about details, that all government is founded on compromise and barter, that man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest and not on metaphysical speculations, that Americans will have no interest except the grandeur and glory of England when not oppressed by it, and that he does not feel the least alarm

from the discontents which may arise from putting the colonists at their ease.

The second objection that granting the colonists power to tax themselves will dissolve the unity of the empire, he demolishes in paragraph one hundred and twenty-two by pointing out that Wales, Chester and Durham were given the right to tax themselves without dissolving the unity of the Empire and that the laws of cause and effect are the same across the Atlantic as they are in England.

From paragraphs one hundred and twenty-three to one hundred and thirty-two Burke bombards Lord North's plan of conciliation and by turning it inside out conclusively proves it is useless and defective. That it is only a ransom by auction, that it is unconstitutional, that it does not satisfy the complaint of the colonists, that its adoption will create trouble and confusion, that it cannot lay any restraint on any colony which cannot be evaded, that it does not provide for prompt payment, that instead of giving a standing revenue it was meant to dissolve their union: these are some of the broadsides by which he blew that makeshift project to pieces.

In comparing Lord North's plan with Burke's the student should note the clause, if said sums are approved by the King and Parliament then the King and Parliament will refrain from levying taxes upon said colonies except those relating to commerce. That clause, the learner will observe, makes the grant depend not upon the will of the colonists, but upon the humor of the King and Parliament. Burke's plan, on the other hand, gave them the right of taxation without any disagreeable conditions.

In paragraph one hundred and thirty-two Burke contrasts the two plans and pleads for his own because it

is plain, mild, universal, conciliatory and unconditional. With Lord North's plan flattened, Burke then proceeds in paragraphs one hundred and thirty-three, one hundred and thirty-four and one hundred and thirty-five to answer the objection that his plan will give no revenue by showing that it will restore the confidence of the people, that the giving or not giving as the taxpayer pleases is the greatest revenue-producing system in the world, that the voluntary flow of heaped-up plenty has ever run with a more copious stream of revenue than could be squeezed from the dry husks of oppressed indigence and that the envy of parties each laboring for the favor of the government will compel each party to make the government as large a contribution as it possibly can afford.

What Burke thought of revenue and its importance to a country is clearly set forth in the following passage :

The revenue of the state is the state. In effect all depends upon it, whether for support or for reformation. The dignity of every occupation wholly depends upon the quantity and the kind of virtue that may be exerted in it. As all great qualities of the mind which operate in public, and are not merely suffering and passive, require force for their display, I had almost said for their unequivocal existence, the revenue, which is the spring of all power, becomes in its administration the sphere of every active virtue. Public virtue, being of a nature magnificent and splendid, instituted for great things, and conversant about great concerns, requires abundant scope and room, and cannot spread and grow under confinement, and in circumstances straitened, narrow, and sordid. Through the revenue alone the body politic can act in its true genius and character, and therefore it will display just as much of its collective virtue, and as much of that virtue which may char-

acterize those who move it, and are, as it were, its life and guiding principle, as it is possessed of a just revenue. For from hence not only magnanimity, and liberality, and beneficence, and fortitude, and providence, and the tutelary protection of all good arts, derive their food, and the growth of their organs, but continence, and self-denial, and labour, and vigilance, and frugality, and whatever else there is in which the mind shows itself above the appetite, are nowhere more in their proper element than in the provision and distribution of the public wealth. It is therefore not without reason that the science of speculative and practical finance, which must take to its aid so many auxiliary branches of knowledge, stands high in the estimation not only of the ordinary sort, but of the wisest and best men; and as this science has grown with the progress of its object, the prosperity and improvement of nations has generally increased with the increase of their revenues; and they will both continue to grow and flourish, as long as the balance between what is left to strengthen the efforts of individuals, and what is collected for the common efforts of the state, bear to each other a due reciprocal proportion, and are kept in a close correspondence and communion.

Burke's answer to the argument that England ought to force the colonies to compound their debt to her for a lump sum, set forth in paragraphs one hundred and thirty-six and one hundred and thirty-seven is conclusive. Here he characterizes such a course not only as unjust, but as the worst economy in the world. Confidently, he warns the Commons never to expect a shilling in the form of revenue from America, cites the case of India to show that revenue from a far distant country is not advantageous and then tells his colleagues that by sending taxable goods to England which can be re-exported for sale in other countries America is doing

enough; and that if they are wise they will reserve the colonists in the full strength for a war in that part of the world—for a war in which said colonists will serve England loyally just as they had served her in previous wars.

Unusual Words and Phrases

PARAGRAPH 118:

I prove too much—since I have shown we have no right to tax the Colonies some will say that it follows we have no right to legislate for them.

PARAGRAPH 120:

logical illation—logical inference

the cords of man—the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin

PARAGRAPH 124:

ransom by auction—an auction of finance at which captivated provinces bid against each other

PARAGRAPH 125:

back door of the Constitution—all arranged by a committee for a subservient Parliament to pass.

PARAGRAPH 126:

mode—neither the amount nor the manner

PARAGRAPH 128:

who refuse all composition—to obtain exemption by paying a lump sum down

give its death wound to English revenue—tobacco was almost the sole product of Virginia

PARAGRAPH 130:

treasury extent—a writ by which the property may be valued, then seized for the recovery of the debt

PARAGRAPH 131:

breaking the union—to engage the Colonies in a quarrel with one another as to the firmness of their respective contributions and so prevent them from uniting against England

PARAGRAPH 133:

the power of refusal—to give or not to give as the subject pleases—the foundation principle of *revenue* by grant

PARAGRAPH 136:

the enemies that we are most likely to have—the French and Spanish

PART IV

For the student there is a treasury of sense, logic, wisdom and eloquence in these three last paragraphs. How sensible it seems when a statesman's comprehensive mind goes back into the twilight of history and traces the origin of simple man, then tribal man, next social man and later political man with feeling, reason, passion, religion, hate, fear, prejudice, property and the millions of ideas which all these pour into his life! How logical it appears when a philosopher points out the circumstances which surround man—circumstances of character as changeable as the weather, circumstances of position formed sometimes by the law of cause and effect and sometimes by accident, circumstances of birth outside his control leading to complexities that are deep and unfathomable! How easy everything looks when the statesman through the vista of birth followed from generation to generation through a long line of ancestors discovers a system of principles which give to man through constitutions founded on them

happiness and freedom! How stirring it is when an orator like Burke can make history, politics and philosophy burn and glow with lessons useful to mankind!

This great peroration, far more eloquent than Burke's frothy sentiments so often quoted on the Queen of France rings with sincerity. It teems with life. It stirs one's blood. Lofty patriotism, undying devotion, respect for justice, passion for truth, trust in providence, magnanimous feelings and love for England all glow in these paragraphs and prove conclusively the towering greatness of Edmund Burke.

Unusual Words and Phrases

PARAGRAPH 137:

this is the true act of navigation—the love of the colonists for freedom which they could find only by being part of a nation which rejoices in liberty

sufferances—permits

cockets—sealed receipts for duties due on goods

clearances—passing goods through the custom house

PARAGRAPH 138:

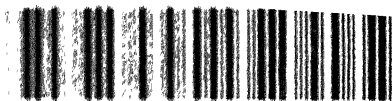
Land Tax Act—an act annually passed by Parliament for raising revenue

Mutiny Bill—a bill passed every year to make the existence of an army depend on the consent of Parliament

PARAGRAPH 139:

sursum corda—lift up your hearts

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